

Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945)

Texts and Commentaries



Volume Three/2

Modernism –
Representations
of National
Culture



Edited by Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny
and Vangelis Kechriotis

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

**DISCOURSES OF COLLECTIVE
IDENTITY IN CENTRAL
AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE
(1770–1945)**

TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES

VOLUME III/2

MODERNISM
—
REPRESENTATIONS OF NATIONAL CULTURE

**DISCOURSES OF COLLECTIVE
IDENTITY IN CENTRAL
AND SOUTHEAST EUROPE (1770–1945):
TEXTS AND COMMENTARIES**

VOLUME III/2

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

AHMET ERSOY, MACIEJ GÓRNY, VANGELIS KECHRIOTIS,
MICHAL KOPEČEK, BOYAN MANCHEV,
BALÁZS TRENCSENYI, MARIUS TURDA



MODERNISM

REPRESENTATIONS OF NATIONAL CULTURE

Edited by

Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny and
Vangelis Kechriotis



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY PRESS
Budapest • New York

©2010 by Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny, Vangelis Kechriotis, Michal Kopeček, Boyan
Manchev, Balázs Trencsényi, Marius Turda

Published in 2010 by

Central European University Press
An imprint of the
Central European University Share Company
Nádor utca 11, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary
Tel: +36-1-327-3138 or 327-3000
Fax: +36-1-327-3183
E-mail: ceupress@ceu.hu
Website: www.ceupress.com

400 West 59th Street, New York NY 10019, USA
Tel: +1-212-547-6932
Fax: +1-646-557-2416
E-mail: mgreenwald@sorosny.org

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted,
in any form or by any means, without the permission
of the Publisher.

ISBN 978 963 7326 64 6 cloth
Series ISBN: 963 7326 51 0 ö

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Modernism : representations of national culture / edited by Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny and
Vangelis Kechriotis.

p. cm. -- (Discourses of collective identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945) :
texts and commentaries ; v. III/2)

ISBN 978-9637326646 (hardbound)

1. Modernism (Aesthetics)--Europe, Eastern--History. 2. Eastern Europe--Intellectual life. 3.
National characteristics, European. I. Ersoy, Ahmet. II. Górny, Maciej, 1976- III. Kechriotis,
Vangelis. IV. Title. V. Series.

BH301.M54M625 2010
001.1094--dc22

2009051961

Printed in Hungary by
Akadémiai Nyomda, Martonvásár

Contributors

Nihad Dostović, Stevo Đurašković, Ildiko Erdei, Ahmet Ersoy, Maciej Górny, Rigels Halili, Nikola Iordanovski, Hamza Karčić, Vangelis Kechriotis, Ohannes Kılıçdağı, Michal Kopeček, Pavol Lukáč, Boyan Manchev, Mateja Ratej, Funda Soysal, Maria Todorova, Balázs Trencsényi, Marius Turda

Consultants

Bojan Aleksov, Sorin Antohi, Franz Leander Fillafer, Guido Franzinetti, Maciej Janowski, Pavel Kolář, Antonis Liakos, István Margócsy, Diana Mishkova, Béla Rasky, Petra Rybářová

Translations by

Alena Alexandrova (from Bulgarian), Elena Alexieva (from Bulgarian), Randy Blasing (from Turkish), Krištof Bodrič (from Serbian), Maurice Bowra (from Hungarian), Anna Bryson (from Czech), Jeremiah Curtin (from Polish), Amila Čelebić (from Bosnian), Robert Deveraux (from Turkish), Zornitsa Dimova-Hristova (from Bulgarian), Nihad Dostović (from Bosnian), Vedran Dronjić (from Serbian), Robert Elsie (from Albanian), Ahmet Ersoy (from Turkish), Leonard Fox (from Albanian), Simon Garnett (from German), Edward Dennis Goy (from Croatian), Şirin Güneşer (from Turkish), Rigels Halili (from Albanian), Kathleen Hayes (from Czech), Nikola Iordanovski (from Macedonian), Hamza Karčić (from Bosnian), Mary Kitroeff (from Greek), Ohannes Kılıçdağı (from Armenian), Mutlu Konuk (from Turkish), Mária Kovács (from Romanian), G. J. Kovtun (from Czech), Linda Krstajić (from Serbian), Jasna Levinger-Goy (from Croatian), Zuzanna Ładyga (from Polish), Pavol Lukáč (from Slovak), Adam Makkai (from Hungarian), Janice Mathie-Heck (from Albanian), W. L. McElwee (from German), Eric Mosbacher (from Polish), Joe O'Donnell (from German), Dávid Oláh (from Hungarian), Cecil Parrott (from Czech), Derek Paton (from Czech, Slovak, and German), Burton Pike (from German), Iva Polak (from Croatian), Robert Russell (from German and Czech), Henry Wickham Steed (from Croatian), A. J. P. Taylor (from German), Marius Turda (from Romanian), Alicia Tyszkiewicz (from Polish), Olga Vuković (from Slovene), Agnieszka Wiercholska (from German), Sophie Wilkins (from German), Peter Zollman (from Hungarian)

Copy-editor

Benjamin Trigona-Harany

Table of Contents

VOLUME III/2

Editorial note

ix

Chapter I.

Cultural modernization: Institutionalization of “national sciences”

Nikolaos Politis: <i>Study on the life of modern Greeks</i>	3
<i>The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in word and picture</i>	9
Ilarion Ruvarac: <i>On prince Lazar</i>	15
Dimitar Marinov: <i>Living antiquity</i>	20
Zsolt Beöthy: <i>The small mirror of Hungarian literature</i>	26
Şemseddin Sami: <i>Turkish lexicon</i>	33
Eugen Lovinescu: <i>The history of modern Romanian civilization</i>	40
Boyan Penev: <i>History of new Bulgarian literature</i>	48
Afet İnan: <i>Prolegomena to an outline of Turkish history</i>	54
Vladimir Levstik: <i>The mission of language</i>	62
Dimitrie Gusti: <i>The science of nation</i>	68

Chapter II.

The “Critical turns”: Subverting the Romantic narratives

Józef Szujski: <i>Some truths from our history</i>	77
Titu Maiorescu: <i>Against the contemporary direction in Romanian culture</i>	87
Michał Bobrzyński: <i>The outline of Polish history</i>	94
Garabet Ibrăileanu: <i>The critical spirit in Romanian culture</i>	101
Giorgos Skliros: <i>Our social question</i>	108
Bohdan Pavlů: <i>Progressivism and conservatism in Slovakia</i>	115
Josef Pekař: <i>The meaning of Czech history</i>	124
Jovan Skerlić: <i>The new youth magazines and our new generations</i>	132
Giorgos Theotokas: <i>Free spirit</i>	139
Emanuel Rádl: <i>The war between Czechs and Germans</i>	146
Branko Merxhani: <i>The organization of the chaos</i>	154

Chapter III.

Literary representations of the “national character”

Henryk Sienkiewicz: <i>With fire and sword; Teutonic knights</i>	163
Aleko Konstantinov: <i>Bay Ganyo</i>	172

Ion Luca Caragiale: <i>Romanian man and Romanian woman</i>	178
Alexandros Papadiamantis: <i>Easter chanter</i>	184
Ömer Seyfeddin: <i>Primo, the Turkish child</i>	190
Ştefan Zeletin: <i>The national character of donkeys</i>	198
Jaroslav Hašek: <i>The good soldier Švejk</i>	206
Robert Musil: <i>The man without qualities</i>	215
Gjergj Fishta: <i>The highland lute</i>	224
Miroslav Krleža: <i>The Banquet in Blitva</i>	230
Aleksander Kamiński: <i>Stones for the rampart</i>	241

Chapter IV. Aesthetic modernism and collective identities

Ioannis Psicharis: <i>My journey</i>	251
<i>The Czech modern</i>	260
Artur Górski: <i>Young Poland</i>	266
Endre Ady: <i>I am the son of king Gog of Magog; Song of the Hungarian Jacobin</i>	274
Dimo Kyorchev: <i>Our sorrows</i>	280
Antun Gustav Matoš: <i>Art and nationalism</i>	286
Ladislav Novomeský: <i>The current state and the development of Slovak culture</i>	295
Milosh Gjergj Nikolla: <i>We, the sons of the new age; The highlander recital</i> ...	304
Tevfik Fikret: <i>Haluk's credo</i>	309
Witold Gombrowicz: <i>Ferdydurke</i>	313
George Seferis: <i>A Greek-Makriyannis</i>	322

Chapter V. Regionalism, autonomism and the minority identity-building narratives

Hovsep Vartanian: <i>The constitutional truths</i>	333
Celadet Alî Bedirxan: <i>The Kurdish question, its origins and causes</i>	343
Krste Petkov Misirkov: <i>On Macedonian matters</i>	351
Metropolitan Andrzej Szeptycki: <i>Address delivered at House of Lords in Vienna</i>	357
Károly Kós: <i>Transylvania</i>	365
Romul Boilă: <i>Study on the reorganization of the unified Romanian state</i>	372
Josef Pfitzner: <i>Sudeten German history</i>	379
<i>Resolution of the Muslims of Banjaluka</i>	387

Editorial note

The collective work on the third “meta-theme” of the series *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770–1945): Texts and Commentaries* proved to be, as is usually the case with issues of identity, a complex and open-ended endeavor. In the course of collating and editing the texts of the intended volume, the multiplicity and heterogeneity in the regional formulations of Modernism manifested itself in such a way that the magnitude of the final product exceeded the initial estimates of the editorial board. This practical constraint made it necessary to sub-divide the volume into two parts, without compromising its thematic structure. Consequently, the logic of the internal division is neither regional nor chronological. It proposes a critical investigation of two parallel and highly interconnected themes: state-centered formulations of national ideologies, on the one hand, and the philosophical and literary attempts to define national essences, national cultures and regional identities on the other. As such, the present sub-volume, concentrating on the latter theme, offers a broader insight on the diverging paths of modernity when considered alongside its other half. In the end, both parts attempt to illustrate the unprecedented and transformative role of Modernism in Central and Southeast Europe by investigating the different manifestations and regional redefinitions of the very concept of modernity.

NIKOLAOS POLITIS: STUDY ON THE LIFE OF MODERN GREEKS

Title: *Μελέτη ἐπὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν νεοτέρων Ἑλλήνων* (Study on the life of modern Greeks)

Originally published: in Τόμος Α' (vol. I), 'Νεοελληνική Μυθολογία' of the four-volume *Μελέτη ἐπὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν νεοτέρων Ἑλλήνων* (Athens: τυποὶς Σαραντάκος Οἰκονόμου, 1871).

Language: Greek

The excerpts used are from the original, *Preface*, pp. α' - γ.'

About the author

Nikolaos Politis [1852, Kalamata (the Peloponnese) – 1921, Athens]: a pioneer of folklore studies in Greece. He completed secondary education in his hometown. In 1868, he enrolled in the School of Philosophy at the University of Athens. From an early age, he started publishing on modern Greek culture in the literary review *Pan-dora*. He was also among the founding members of the *Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Παρνασσός* (Philological society *Parnassos*). After he completed his studies in literature and law in Athens in 1876, he was granted a state scholarship to continue in Munich, as a student of the famous Byzantinist Karl Krumbacher. In 1880, Politis returned to Athens where he undertook the establishment of the Library of the Parliament. In 1882, he was appointed as adjunct professor of Greek mythology at the University of Athens. Parallel to this, he actively participated in the foundation of the *Ιστορική και Εθνολογική Εταιρεία* (Historical and ethnological society), one of the leading literary associations for the promotion of national history and culture. In 1885, he was appointed the general inspector of public education. He resigned in 1888, due to political controversies. In 1889, together with the famous poet Georgios Drosinis, he took over the publication of the literary review *Ἑστία* (Hearth). Politis turned towards comparative folklore studies already when he was a student, in 1871, with his 'Study on the life of Modern Greeks.' As an academic, however, he started teaching folklore only in 1908. Prior to this, in 1899, he published a few volumes under the title 'Studies on the life and language of the Hellenic people' in a series funded by the Greek merchant Maraslis. In 1909, he founded the *Ἑλληνική Λαογραφική Ἑταιρεία* (Hellenic folklore society) and published the review *Λαογραφία* (Folklore studies). In 1914, he published a collection under the title 'Selections from the songs of the Greek people,' which constitutes the first critical edition of those lyrics. In 1918, upon his suggestion, the *Λαογραφικὸν Ἀρχεῖον* (Folklore archive) was founded, aiming at the collection and publication of folklore mate-

rial. Equally significant was Politis's influence on the young short story writers of the time. It was exactly during the 1880s and 1890s that the interest of many authors shifted from historical to contemporary life, especially in the countryside (see **Alexandros Papadiamantis**, *Easter chanter*). Politis not only inspired but also institutionally reinforced this trend. In 1883, *Ἑστία*, the review Politis co-published, launched the first competition for the writing of a 'Greek short story.' Similar competitions were to take place every six months. Thus, Politis contributed to the emergence of a new literary genre which helped many young writers become literary figures.

Main works: *Μελέτη ἐπὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν νεοτέρων Ἑλλήνων* 6 vols. [Study on the life of the Modern Greeks] (1871–1874); *Μελέτη περὶ τοῦ βίου καὶ τῆς γλώσσης τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ λαοῦ* [Study on the life and language of the Greek people] (1889); *Παραδόσεις τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ λαοῦ* 2 vols. [Traditions of the Greek people] (1904); *Αἱ ἐκλογαὶ ἀπὸ τὰ τραγούδια τοῦ ἑλληνικοῦ λαοῦ* [Selections from the songs of the Greek people] (1914).

Context

The period between 1875 and 1893 was marked by an attempt to introduce a series of reforms in Greek society under the political leadership of British-educated and western-oriented Harilaos Trikoupis. Contrary to the priorities of irredentism and territorial expansion prevailing until then, the aim now was to create a modern, rationally-organized and strong state. This need derived not less from the realization that the Greeks' glorious past, conveniently appropriated and celebrated during the first decades of independence, did not suffice any more to attract European interest and sympathy. Neo-Hellenes were to prove that the cultural origins they claimed could be coupled by an equally remarkable present. However, unlike most other European nations which sought their origins in the medieval past, Greeks appealed to a glorious antiquity universally accepted as culturally superior, to which they claimed to be directly connected. Therefore, the nation had to present its own autochthonous cultural output in order to prove that the ancient spirit was still alive. The historian **Constantinos Paparrigopoulos** had created the national canon of the Hellenic nation. This canon now had to be conveyed into various other fields, and most importantly to be proven valid.

This effort took the shape of the scientific consolidation of three disciplines, namely history, ethnography and linguistics, and the ensuing establishment of the respective academic fields. History was already taught at the University of Athens, founded in 1837, first as World History, and then starting with Constantinos Paparrigopoulos, as History of the Hellenic nation.

Moreover, preoccupation with history had already dominated in the public sphere as a means of national self-awareness. A new approach was introduced by Spyridon Lambros, who initiated his courses in 1875. The Greek historian, having studied in Germany, was deeply influenced by Leopold von Ranke as well as the Prussian Historical School, which reiterated Ranke's practical approach but criticized him for his lack of patriotic engagement. Thus, Lambros inaugurated a methodology of 'National History,' largely dependant on written sources and based on factual evidence. This approach was supposed to repudiate any ideological prerequisite. The second relevant discipline to be introduced into the University of Athens was linguistics. Georgios Hatzidakis was appointed the first professor of this chair in 1880. Having also been educated in Germany, Hatzidakis devoted himself to the task of demonstrating the continuity between the ancient and modern Greek languages. Therefore, he focused his study on the medieval language, which provided the necessary link for this continuity. This was an innovative approach that would facilitate the further integration of Byzantium into the pattern of historical continuity already introduced by Paparrigopoulos. Accordingly, he established the Chair in Medieval and Modern Greek Literature at the University of Athens. The emphasis on research and empirical knowledge was also dominant in his discourse.

The challenge of the time, however, was met by the emergence of the discipline of folklore studies, which claimed a place distinct from history, archaeology and philology. Its founder Nikolaos Politis introduced the novel term *laographia*, which literally means 'the study of people.' The establishment of this discipline had an interesting prehistory. Already before the founding of the Greek state, the first publication in Paris of the *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne* by Claude Fauriel in 1825 was an initial expression of the interest in the study of Greek folk songs, which are known as *δημοτικά* (demotic) from the ancient Greek word *demos*. As the result of a Romantic confidence in the value of the cultural production of the folk, European scholars were already studying folk songs for signs of a lingering spiritual vitality. In the early 1850s, the most significant historical journal of the nineteenth century, *Pandora* (see **Markos Renieris**, *What is Greece? West or east*), launched a campaign, initiated by the collector and amateur historian Spyridon Zambelios. The aim of the campaign was to urge the readers to collect material evidence from the medieval period of Latin rule in what were now the Greek lands. In 1867, the same review announced a philological prize competition sponsored by a Greek merchant from Odessa, Th. P. Rodokanakis. This was one of the many competitions organized by the University of Athens with the goal of "promoting national culture." The announce-

ment urged the participants “to collect from as many districts as possible Greek customs and habits and compare them with the ones mentioned in the surviving works (of ancient Greek writers) so that their similarities and differences can be identified.” Among other things, young scholars were asked to trace and collect elements of their own material culture which had never been considered important by any foreign scholar since they were part of everyday life. Such a collection, it was suggested, could serve the preservation of a culture which was gradually being eliminated due to the strong impulse of the Neo-Hellenes to imitate Western modes and habits. What was needed was the creation of a national discipline dominated by indigenous scholars.

Politis, still a university student at that time, entered the *Pandora* contest with his essay ‘Study on the life of modern Greeks,’ which was to become a seminal work of the new discipline. The work submitted was only the first volume of what was to become a four-volume study. This first part contained a collection of tales allegedly of ancient Greek origin. In his introduction presented here, Politis presents his work as a response to Jacob Philipp Fallmerayer’s claims. The Austrian historian had challenged the idea of a historical continuity between ancient and modern Greeks. The responses by Greek scholars already addressed to him, Politis argues, were not grounded in scientific argumentation. His concern was exactly to implement a “precise knowledge” in drawing the “resemblance of life” between ancient Greek culture and the “character of the nation.” Therefore, he considered this study an endeavor of national significance.

Following this tremendous success, the young scholar became an accomplished academic. The term *laografia* was firstly introduced in 1884 to describe the discipline of folklore studies. The new discipline combined philological and ethnographical methods, and was eventually used to serve Greek irredentism. As it has been argued, for Politis, songs and folktales were not only relics of the past but also “prophecies of future redemption.”

Nikolaos Politis’s collections of ‘Songs of the Greek People’ or ‘Proverbs of the Greek People’ are still being used as supplementary educational material in high school curricula. Their academic value, on the other hand, as well as the political implication of the discipline of folklore studies, has been duly criticized. Recently, Alexis Politis, a famous philologist and descendent of the founder of the discipline, systematically studied the ‘discovery’ of the demotic songs in the first half of the nineteenth century, while the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld dwelled upon the interrelation between folklore and national ideology, focusing particularly on Politis’ contribution.

A study on the life of modern Greeks

Preface

The history of a nation does not consist only of a narration of the events which had an influence on its fate. What is necessary, in order for this history to be as complete and as perfectly formed as possible, is to have precise and detailed knowledge of the character and spirit of this nation. For, besides contributing to an easier discovery and comprehension of the causes and results of these events, this knowledge is often useful in the clarification of obscure and controversial historical issues.

Approximately forty years ago, an educated German by the name of Fallmerayer, extremely well-versed in our Medieval history, attempted to prove that the Hellenic race had become completely extinct and that a medley of all sorts of ethnicities and races, especially Slavic ones, today inhabits the land of Greece. And though it is true that he did not conscientiously handle historical accounts, endeavoring to pervert everything in order to fortify his beliefs and omitting every account that contradicted these beliefs, those of our side who have endeavored to refute the writings of the German historian have, with few exceptions, broke into abuse and ridicule not in the least appropriate to scientific discourse, and only afterwards did they present, using facts and certain historical events, proof of the groundlessness of such conjecture. For this, with justified sarcasm does Fallmerayer, in an entire chapter of his book *Fragmente aus dem Orient*, mention these strictures and the cool reception which he was afforded in Athens (in 1840, when he visited Greece) by all its inhabitants, and especially by the literati, for having endeavored to prove them to be Slavs.

But one of the strongest arguments against the claims of the German historiographer is the similarity between our life and that of the ancient Greeks. Besides those who have used this argument incidentally, special dissertations by, among our own, Mr. Bibylakis¹² and Anastasios Georgiadis Lefkias³⁴,

¹ Bibylakis *Neugriechisches Leben, verglichen mit dem Altgriechischen zur Erläuterung Beider*. Berlin, 1840, 74 pages. [Author's footnote]

² Emmanouil Bibylakis (1806–1880): Greek educator and scholar who contributed to the development of Greek education in his homeland, the island of Crete.

³ Anastasios Georgiadis Lefkias, *Ἀνατροπή τῶν δοξασάντων, γραψάντων καὶ τύποις κοινωνησάντων, ὅτι οὐδεὶς τῶν νῦν τὴν Ἑλλάδα οἰκούντων ἀπόγονος τῶν ἀρχαίων Ἑλλήνων ἐστίν* (Recounting of those who believed, wrote and publicized that none of the current inhabitants of Greece is a descendent of the ancient Greeks), Athens, 1843, 105 pages, in Greek and in Latin. [Author's footnote]

and, among foreigners, Mr. Curt Wachsmuth,⁵⁶ and Mr. Bernhard Schmidt⁷, have been published in the form of a book, the first volume of which was published about a month ago.

Sensing the importance and national interest of the subject, the judges of the philological competition established by the patriotic Th. P. Rodokanakis set as a question of the sixth period the collection of the manners and customs of as many Greek locations as possible and their comparison to those cited in the surviving works of ancient authors in order to make known their similarities and differences.

Aiming at the national significance of this issue, I too threw myself into this competition; and, in order for the aspired goal to be best achieved, I endeavored, not limiting myself to the stipulations of the judges, to collect the manners and customs not only from the people itself, but from every book which contained even a small piece of related information, and to compare these to those of other nations as well.

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

⁴ Anastasios Georgiadis Lefkias (1773–1853): Greek medical doctor and scholar. He served as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Athens.

⁵ Curt Wachsmuth, *Das alte Griechenland im neuen, Mit einem Anhang über Sitten und Aberglauben der Neugriechen bei Geburt, Hochzeit und Tod*, Bonn, 1864. This study, apart from the appendix and part of the notes, was translated into Greek by Emmanouil Galanis, and it was published as a separate leaflet in [the island of] Cephalonia, in the newspaper *Εὐρίππος* in Chalkis and in *Ἐπτάλοφος*, a journal in Constantinople. [Author's footnote]

⁶ Curt Wachsmuth (1837–1905): German ancient historian and classical philologist. He held the chair of Ancient History and Classical Philology at the University of Leipzig for twenty years (1886–1906).

⁷ Bernhard Schmidt (1820–1870): German painter.

THE AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN MONARCHY IN WORD AND PICTURE

Title: *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild. Auf Anregung und unter Mitwirkung Seiner kaiserlichen und königlichen Hoheit des durchlauchtigsten Kronprinzen Erzherzog Rudolf* (The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in word and picture. At the suggestion of and assisted by his imperial and royal Highness, the Crown Prince Archduke Rudolf)

Originally published: Vienna, Druck und Verlag der Kaiserlich-königlichen Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1886–1902, 24 vols.

Language: German

The excerpts used are from the original, vol. I, pp. 5–17.

About the author

Archduke Rudolf, Crown Prince of Austria, Hungary and Bohemia [1858, Schloss Laxenburg (Lower Austria) – 1889, Mayerling (Lower Austria)]: he was the son of Emperor Francis Joseph I (1830–1916) and heir to the Habsburg throne. Rudolf was tutored by prominent Austrian scholars, including the geologist and historian Ferdinand von Hochstetter (1829–1884), professor at the Polytechnical Institute in Vienna, and from 1876 onwards, the director of the Museum of Natural History. It was Hochstetter who cultivated Rudolf's interests in natural sciences and anthropology. In 1881, Rudolf married Stephanie, daughter of the Belgian king, Leopold II (1835–1909). In contrast to his conservative father, Rudolf held distinctively liberal views, as illustrated by his articles and friendship with various journalists in Vienna, including Moritz Szeps (1835–1902), the editor of the liberal *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*. In 1889 he and his mistress, Baroness Mary Vetsera, were found dead in Mayerling, apparently having committed suicide. Various theories circulated about a political murder due to his extravagant political convictions and tense relationship with his father. Despite Rudolf's death, the publication of the collective work 'Austria-Hungary in word and picture,' which he initiated in 1884, continued until 1902. Although the volumes were also translated into Hungarian and some into Croatian, their scholarly impact was modest; moreover, some of the Empire's nationalities, like the Czechs and the Romanians even opposed it. After 1989, various volumes and abridged versions of 'Austria-Hungary in word and picture' were re-edited, generating new interest in this work from scholars of Central Europe and the general public alike.

Main works: *Die österreichisch-ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild. Auf Anregung und unter Mitwirkung Seiner kaiserlichen und königlichen Hoheit des durchlauchtigsten Kronprinzen Erzherzog Rudolf* 24 vols. [The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in word and picture. At the suggestion of and assisted by his imperial and royal Highness, the Crown Prince Archduke Rudolf] (1886–1889); *Politische Briefe an einen Freund* [Political letters to a friend], ed. by J. Szepe (1922).

Context

Ethnography became an established academic discipline during the nineteenth century, with chairs and departments being established in Germany, France, Britain and the Netherlands. The ‘Viennese Association for Anthropology, Ethnology and Archaeology’ was formed in 1870 by Freiherr Ferdinand von Andrian-Werburg (1835–1914), Josef Szombathy (1853–1943) and three professors of anatomy, Karl Langer (1819–1903), Emil Zuckerkandl (1849–1910) and Carl Toldt (1840–1920). The ‘Hungarian National and Anthropological Society’ was established in 1878, followed shortly thereafter by the creation of the Department of Anthropology at Pázmány Péter University in Budapest in 1881 with the leading Hungarian craniologist Aurél Török (1842–1912) as its first chair. The ‘Hungarian Ethnographic Society’ was established in 1889. Yet while Western European ethnographers were mostly concerned with various colonial settings in Africa, Asia and Australia, their counterparts in Central Europe focused on the heterogeneous representation of peoples offered by the region’s diverse ethnic arrangement. Such an interest in the history of “individual ethnic groups” paralleled an already existing tradition, originating in the Enlightenment, which reflected the Austrian imperial ambition to inventory the “land and people” under its administration. One such work was produced between 1855 and 1857 by the Austrian statistician Karl Freiherr von Czoernig-Czernhausen (1804–1855) under the title *Ethnographie der Oesterreichischen Monarchie*, an eloquent example of how imperial administrators viewed the ethnic heterogeneity of their state. This was an ambitious program, and one which became an integral part of certain trends of political thinking within the Austrian Empire centered on the idea of “collective patriotism” and the role of the House of Habsburg in fostering a trans-national loyalty of its subjects.

Karl Freiherr von Rokitsansky (1804–1878), the head of the ‘Institute of Pathological Anatomy’ in Vienna, for instance, equated anthropology with the natural history of man. To achieve this task, anthropology should not only investigate the past but also engage in collaborative work with other

disciplines, like history and sociology. It was, in other words, a very broad definition of anthropology, but one which in practice clearly resembled Czoernig-Czernhausen's idea of Imperial Austria as a special place composed of different ethnic groups (*Völkerbestand*). Both Czoernig-Czernhausen and Rokitsansky believed that only the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy could accommodate politically the different ethnic groups and historical traditions of Central and Eastern Europe, which shared a common geographical framework and common historical past. Such an idea was widely popularized by imperial propaganda until 1918, most spectacularly in 'The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in word and picture.'

Presumably, Rudolf had already composed the draft of an ethnographic compendium of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1883, presenting his idea to the Emperor in 1884. Following Francis Joseph's approval, the Archduke asked two prominent writers, Mór Jókai (1825–1904) and Josef Ritter von Weilen (1874–1899), to preside over of the Hungarian and the Austrian editorial committees respectively. Each committee was composed of eight members. Various scholars and artists were invited to contribute, including the economist Karl Menger (1857–1985) and the music critic Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), but also successful businessmen like Nikolaus Dumba (1830–1900). Although there was a constant dialogue between editors and authors, and the contents of the volumes were frequently changed, the Viennese editorial committee maintained intellectual and artistic control. In many ways, there was not much conceptual maneuvering, especially when it came to sensitive issues like linguistic or cultural autonomy. Nevertheless, when finalized, the volumes seemed to have followed a unitary framework, and those ideas of separateness and differences were seen as expressions of intellectual creativity rather than opposing the holistic patriotic platform suggested by Rudolf.

The first installment was completed in 1885, and it was duly presented to the Emperor by Rudolf, Jókai and von Weilen. In total, 397 bi-monthly installments were published between 1885 and 1902; 77 of them being published in Rudolf's lifetime. After Rudolf's death, the Emperor continued to support the publication of the remaining volumes, with Princess Stephanie acting as the successor to her late husband. The secretary of the Austrian committee, Joseph Böck, carried on the monumental task of coordinating authors and artists, and supervising the printing, subscription and distribution process.

The treatment of each region of the Empire was based on a similar structure, focusing on ancient history, country history and geography, ethnography, music, literature, theatre, architecture, art, constitutional history, and

political economy. Detailed information about the country and a description of the regions composing it were also provided, accompanied by the appropriate illustrations. The chapters were written by a person who was considered to be an expert in the field, and in most cases the authors originated from the ethnic group or region they were asked to write about. The general aim was, therefore, to offer the reader a panoramic perspective on and a first hand experience of the Empire's convoluted history.

Even though most of the descriptions of regional and local rituals, music, traditions and practices produced a static, almost ahistorical, version of ethnographic reality, most authors succeeded in presenting a credible narrative about a particular history which had developed within the unique geographical and cultural environment provided by the Empire. It was, in fact, what Rudolf had wanted. He outlined his conceptual vision in the introduction. Its first and foremost goal was to present the cultural, geo-political and ethnic diversity of the Habsburg Monarchy as interdependent. The multi-ethnic character of the Monarchy was moreover interpreted as a positive development, enhancing Rudolf's conviction that the cultural and political mission of the Monarchy was not only to show to the world the achievement of German culture in Austria, but also to channel the intellectual achievements of the myriad of ethnic groups inhabiting its territories. True to his origin and status, Rudolf could not but imagine that there was unfailing loyalty amongst these ethnic groups for the Empire; he was, however, aware that this ceremonial dynastic loyalty needed to be gradually complemented by a modern form of dynastic patriotism. In this respect, Rudolf believed that ethnic rivalry notwithstanding, the Empire's family of nations was not unhappy, and the encyclopedic work was meant to provide a synopsis of this peaceful coexistence of different historical traditions. However, it is symptomatic of the competing identity narratives co-existing in the Monarchy that the German and Hungarian versions of the book contained different formulations of some of the most ideologically loaded issues.

Since the 1990s, with the increased interest in the Habsburg Monarchy, 'Austria-Hungary in word and picture' has been re-discussed and introduced to the general public. Contrary to its outdated methodology and political intentions, the volumes are now viewed not only as a remarkable example of collaborative scholarly work in the multinational regions of Central and Eastern Europe, but also as an indication that attempts to work towards the creation of a general patriotic ethos in the Habsburg Monarchy were not as trivial as once assumed.

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in word and picture

The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy still lacks an extensive ethnographic study despite some good preliminary works that have already been accomplished. Yet, there is a need for a thorough work up-to-date to present scientific research and using the very refined artistic methods of reproduction. This work should be inspiring and instructive and at the same time shall offer a complete picture of our Fatherland and its various peoples.

The study of the peoples living within the borders of the Monarchy is not only an important field of research for scholars but is also of practical value in order to raise general patriotism and the love for one's country.

The insight into the merits and peculiarities of each of the ethnographic groups and their mutual and material dependencies on one another that will be portrayed in such a study as this shall substantially fortify the feeling of solidarity, which shall further unite all the peoples of our Fatherland.

All ethnic groups who until now have felt isolated from other national elements, due to their language, custom and partially diverging historical development, will now be beneficently affected by scientific literature. Each will adequately acknowledge and thus appreciate their individuality. These ethnic groups are in turn invited to seek their mental and spiritual center in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

It is thus of great importance, in our Fatherland especially, to cultivate ethnography and ancillary sciences. They allow for the assembling of the material needed to compare and to evaluate objectively the various nations. Such an examination allows an analysis free of all poorly conceived theories and of the political passions of the parties. [...]

We cannot conceal that ethnography has been less promoted in Austria-Hungary than it was in Germany, England or France, and recently even in Russia, although the Monarchy possesses the same facilities as other states in order to undertake such studies.

Nevertheless, some precious studies on particular peoples have been published. Yet, they either remained unutilized in scholarly journals and scientific periodicals or they have been unfortunately too often summarized by foreign publications.

Therefore, the idea emerged to collect the rich material that until now has been not utilized properly in Austria-Hungary. This way, we can create a work that will accommodate the artistic and scientific self-conception of each nation living within the borders of the Monarchy and that will honor the whole Monarchy with all its elements.

Where shall we find another state that would furnish equally interesting images to such an ethnographic study if not Austria-Hungary? The Monarchy is rich in the manifold shapes of its landscape. It is wonderfully diverse as to its natural history, its agriculture, and its climate. Moreover, various ethnic groups live within the borders of the Monarchy.

These considerations inspired us to undertake this work. A group of Austrian and Hungarian writers and artists will give an account in word and picture of the whole beloved Fatherland. They will invite the readership to a walking-tour through the wide, wide land, amidst the various nations with their many languages, amidst ever changing images.

This is the goal of our work. *Austria-Hungary in word and picture* shall have an earnest patriotic impact due to its scientific and artistic values but also due to its truly popular character.

The literary and artistic circles of all the peoples of the Monarchy have united in order to create this joint study. This work shall reveal here and abroad the rich sum of the mental and intellectual vigor of all of the Monarchy's peoples in the territories they inhabit. They have united to work on this beautiful creation that shall fortify the self-conception of our Fatherland and the powerful feeling of love for our country.

In the course of this project one territory after another will be illustrated in word and picture. New writers and artists will therefore consecutively join this project and portray the countries they originated from. They will rejoin their precursors with as much devotion and zeal. The study, completed after years of work, will be a monument for the intellectual creativity and vigor of our present times and a monument for all times: *Austria-Hungary in word and picture*.

Translated by Agnieszka Wiercholska

ILARION RUVARAC: ON PRINCE LAZAR

Title: *O knezu Lazaru* (On Prince Lazar)

Originally published: *Стражилово*, No. 3 (1887)

Language: Serbian

The excerpts used are from *Boj na Kosovu – starija i novija saznanja* (Belgrade: Književne novine, 1992), pp. 17–287.

About the author

Ilarion Ruvarac [1832, Sremska Mitrovica (*Hun.* Szávaszentdemeter, Vojvodina, present-day west Serbia) – 1905, Grgeteg Monastery (near Novi Sad, *Hun.* Újvidék)]: clergyman and historian, founder of the “critical school” in Serbian historiography. Ruvarac attended gymnasiums in Sremski Karlovci (*Hun.* Karlóca) and Vienna. During his Law studies in Vienna (1852–56), he became interested in history. After studying theology, he entered the monastic order and took the name Ilarion. Ruvarac was the first to challenge the Romantic tradition in Serbian historiography. He dedicated much of his life to the excavation and critical edition of sources, mostly on medieval Serbian history, upholding the scientific status of historical as opposed to literary (for example, poetic or folkloric) sources. His first works were related to the examination of church documents and some poorly investigated or controversial topics of medieval Serbian history. Later, he became a passionate participant in the public debates focusing on issues of historical method and history writing. In 1888 he became one of the first members of the Serbian Royal Academy. Despite his academic predilections and critical scientific method, Ruvarac remained a man of the church. From 1874, he was archimandrite of Grgeteg Monastery, to which he had withdrawn and where he would later die. Ruvarac remained a source of inspiration for generations of historians who tried to remain close to his critical approach, contrary to the persistent romanticist orientation in historiography that tended to glorify the national historical past.

Main works: *Kraljice i carice srpske* [Serbian queens and empresses] (1868); *O prvim godinama Dušanovog kraljevanja u hronološkom pogledu* [On the first years of king Dušan’s rule, in chronological respect] (1872); *Nešto o Bosni dabarskoj i dabrobosanskoj episkopiji i o srpskim manastirima u Bosni* [Some notes on Dabar-Bosnia bishopric and Serbian monasteries in Bosnia] (1878); *Hronološka pitanja o vremenu bitke na Marici, smrti kralja Vukašina i smrti cara Uroša* [Chronological issues on the timing of the Marica battle, death of the king Vukašin and the death of the emperor Uroš] (1879) *O knezu Lazaru* [On Prince Lazar] (1888).

Context

The study 'On Prince Lazar' first appeared in the journal *Stražilovo*, where parts of the study were published over the course of almost a whole year. The complete text was published as a separate book in 1888, the year before the five-hundredth anniversary of the famous Battle of Kosovo (1389). The same year witnessed the publication of a study dedicated to the same event by Ljubomir Kovačević. Both studies, Ruvarac's *O knezu Lazaru* and Kovačević's *Vuk Branković*, represent a reappraisal of existing historical knowledge related to the Battle of Kosovo, an event that is considered to be a landmark in the conception of Serbian national identity. The defeat in 1389 marked the beginning of five centuries of Ottoman rule in Serbia. The dilemma of the Serbian prince Lazar Hrebeljanović is presented in myth and in epic poetry as a choice between the 'earthly kingdom' and the eternal 'heavenly kingdom.' Although he chose the 'heavenly kingdom' and eternal glory, prince Lazar placed a curse upon all those who did not want to accompany him into the decisive battle. This curse epitomizes a metaphor depicting the struggle for national unity. In addition to prince Lazar, the myth of Kosovo has become in Serbian folk tradition the source and inspiration for establishing several mythologized figures. Miloš Obilić was the hero who killed Sultan Murat, whose name still stands for heroism and bravery. Vuk Branković symbolizes betrayal in popular belief, while the nobleness of the Serbian people is shown through the image of a 'maiden from Kosovo' (*Kosovka devojka*) looking for her beloved among the survivors.

At the time when Ruvarac and Kovačević wrote their studies, the dominant approach to the study of history was based on using oral poetry and folk legends as the main sources. Panta Srećković, professor of history at the *Velika škola* in Belgrade, was the main ideologue and practitioner of this approach that was largely inspired by Romanticism. Ruvarac's approach to the study of history was the opposite. He insisted on a scrupulous study of the written sources and upheld that the ultimate goal of the researcher must be to reveal the historical truth. He challenged the old, romanticized glorification of a distant medieval past with a search for objective knowledge and the use of positive historical sources. Even before the publication of *O knezu Lazaru*, Ruvarac and Kovačević's findings disturbed the 'old school' historians. Historical facts about the Kosovo battle, which undermined the traditional knowledge based on legends, were felt to pose a threat to national dignity, and a long lasting debate—compared sometimes to that surrounding the language reform of **Vuk Karadžić**—between the 'old school' and the critical

one began. Ruvarac and his supporters were accused of “destroying national sacraments,” and their criticism of the use of tradition was seen as “weakening the national spirit.” Nevertheless, the works of Ruvarac and Kovačević acutely pointed out the biases of uncritical history, and *O knezu Lazaru* signaled the triumph of critical historiography. Thus, it is believed that Ruvarac’s school of historical research was a turning point in the development of the discipline prior to its official institutionalization. Ruvarac’s study stands out as a prototype of critical historiography in Serbia for its strong emphasis on the study of sources. The public debate it instigated was later interpreted as a dialog between the new, modern European culture and the defenders of the older, patriarchal and traditional mentality.

Though the impact of critical historiography became an important focal point for the future generations of historians, it has not had any significant impact on the popular discourse on the Kosovo battle, which in some cases still influences and inspires some pseudo-historical research that enjoys wide popularity. Nevertheless, it could be said that the scholarly and the popular discourses seem to continue their parallel lives.

IE

On prince Lazar

History knows not of Jug-Bogdan¹ and the Jugović brothers and also knows not that this Jug Bogdan was father-in-law to prince Lazar and the Jugović brothers were his brothers-in-law. It also knows nothing of prince or Ban Strahinja² or about Banović Strahinja, or that this Banović Strahinja was brother-in-law to prince Lazar, and finally it knows nothing of Ivan or of Milan for that matter and that both of them went with Miloš to a Turkish camp and were killed there before Miloš. History knows not of them nor of these matters, that is to say, neither our historical records nor even Orbin³ or Luka-

¹ Jug-Bogdan, according to epic poetry, was the father of the princess Milica, wife of prince Lazar, who commanded the Serbian army at the Battle of Kosovo. He had nine sons, the Jugović brothers, all of whom died in the battle.

² Banović Strahinja, according to epic poetry, was a Serbian nobleman, whose wife was said to have a love affair with the Ottoman hero Vlah Alija while Banović Strahinja was away. The poem glorifies his nobleness, for he decided to forgive her for what was considered one of the hardest betrayals at the time.

³ Mavro Orbin or Mauro Orbini (1563–1610): a monk and historian born in Ragusa (present-day Dubrovnik, Croatia), who became famous for his book *Il Regno degli Slavi* (The kingdom of the Slavs).

rević⁴ know anything of this. Only folk stories and songs and those common stories and stories included in the genealogy compiled around the middle of the century do.

In the history, the true history of the Battle of Kosovo, there cannot be any mention of either Jug or the Jugović brothers, or of Strahinj-ban or Milan Topličanin⁵ or Ivan Kosačić or Kosajčić. But what about the prince's supper? This supper is mentioned not only by *Orbin*, but also the hundred-year older *Duca's interpreter* and *Tubero* from Dubrovnik.⁶ "Thus that supper will," as Mr. A. Pavić concludes, "be a historical fact." And if a historical fact it is then it should most certainly be mentioned in the true history of the Battle of Kosovo. Very well! Let those who care so much about the supper write about it, but what should the poor souls write about that prince's supper on the eve of St. Vid's day when they must not mention "The prince's father-in-law, old Jug Bogdan" or "The prince's dear brothers-in-law, the nine brothers, the nine Jugović brothers" or "The prince's brother-in-law, the fearsome Strahinj-ban," nor the friends of Miloš, the handsome Ivan Kosačić of Kosajnica and the tall Milan Toplica or Topličanin. Who should prince Lazar seat in the place of old Jug Bogdan, on his right, and who should take up both sides of Lazar's princely table if not the Jugović brothers. And what will Miloš do without Milan, Ivan and Banović Strahinja? And again Miloš, by himself and lonely and not prince Lazar's son-in-law! And will he who will tell the story of the prince's supper in the true history of the Battle of Kosovo dare to mention that it was Vuk himself, gentleman and son-in-law to prince Lazar, who falsely accused Miloš, the princely non-son-in-law and non-brother-in-law of Lazar, of infidelity, etc?

Let therefore the story of the prince's supper be sung by blind *gusla*-players⁷ playing their instruments and told by simple story-tellers without

⁴ Jakov Lukarević (1551–1615): a historian from Ragusa.

⁵ Milan Topličanin and Ivan Kosačić were, according to epic poetry, two of the heroic knights at the Battle of Kosovo.

⁶ According to the literary historian Jelka Redep, this reference should relate to the translation of an account of the Battle of Kosovo written by the Byzantine historian Ducas. The translation was done by an anonymous resident of Dubrovnik. Lodovico Cerva Tubero (c. 1459–1527) was another important humanist historian from Dalmatia.

⁷ The *gusla* (traditional musical instrument) and *gusla* playing have a very strong symbolic meaning in Serbian traditional culture, for it was connected with traditional village life and also with popular reproduction of epic songs describing the Serbian legendary heroic past. This collection of images, values, stories, characters, social norms was transmitted through oral poetry, sung with the *gusla*, and was used as a foundation for a nineteenth century national discourse.

them, and let the stories make mention of Jug and the Jugović brothers and Milan and Ivan and Banović Strahinja; and let the learned songwriters and men of verse: the Mušickis, the Sterijas and the Živkoviés keep lamenting over “the mother of woe, the prince’s supper,” and make loud and clear mention in their cantatas of those very heroes, but the future Serbian historian, whose task is completely different from that of the *gusla*-players, singers, poets, praise-givers and wailers, must hold himself back and must not yield to his heart’s desire, and while writing the history of the Battle of Kosovo, let him not heed histories arranged by those songs or stories, but let him question and examine what the first and earliest and therefore the best historical sources say about that and whether there is agreement between the information from these sources. [...]

The question therefore whether a man of letters, a poet, is allowed to change folk tradition is none of my business and if it were and if I were some sort of a poet, I would simply say that he is allowed, for the truth is above all, and that which is not so, which lacks a firm foundation, which is far-fetched, decorated, artificial and fictitious must sooner or later collapse and fall down and is therefore subject to change; and that which is true will remain even if it is buried, shrouded and stifled and will live anew and shine out anew, even if every Tom, Dick and Harry eat their hearts out. No man is infallible, nor is a group of people called a nation such, and least of all is that which came to the people from times of old, the so-called folk-lore or folk-tradition. So why should one not be allowed to alter that folk tradition? And why should one not tell folks that Serbia did not fall because Vuk Branković committed treason at Kosovo or even before Kosovo, because there is no proof that Vuk Branković did so and because there is no proof either that something else was the cause of Serbia’s downfall?

Translated by Linda Krstajić, Krištof Bodrič and Vedran Dronjić

DIMITAR MARINOV: LIVING ANTIQUITY

Title: *Жива старина* (Living antiquity)

Originally published: Rousse, 1891

Language: Bulgarian

The excerpts used are from the original, Preface, pp. iii–v and from Димитър Маринов, *Избрани произведения*, vol. I: *Народна вяра и религиозни народни обичаи* (Sofia: Наука и изкуство, 1981), Introduction to Book VII of Living Antiquity: ‘Popular Faith and religious popular customs’ (originally published in the Almanac of folklore and ethnography [Сборник за народни умотворения], vol. XXVIII, 1914), pp. 33–35.

About the author

Dimitar Marinov [1846, Armaluj, present-day north Bulgaria – 1940, Sofia]: ethnologist and historian. Born in the village of Armaluj, he was adopted by a rich burgher family from Lom, the period’s most important northwestern Bulgarian town on the Danube. He studied first with **Neofit Rilski** at the Rila Monastery (1863), and later at the military medical school in Constantinople (*Tur.* Istanbul) (1867–1871). Following that, he graduated from the classical gymnasium and studied philosophy in Belgrade. Imprisoned for revolutionary activity before the proclamation of Bulgarian autonomy in 1878, he became deputy in the Constitutional Assembly (1879), and following that, a judge (1879–1882) and teacher. He was also the director of the National Library (1894) and the first director of the Ethnographic Museum (1906–1908), both in Sofia. In the last years of his life, he withdrew from active social life. He received a clerical rank and continued his ethnographic work. Apart from his ethnographical research, Marinov is also the author of the first history of Bulgarian literature written by a Bulgarian author (‘History of Bulgarian literature’). Also important are his memoirs of the Stambolov period (‘Stefan Stambolov and our contemporary history’).

Main works: *История на българската литература* [History of Bulgarian literature] (1887); *Как е създадена българската екзархия* [How the Bulgarian Exarchate was created] (1898); *Жива старина* [Living antiquity] (vol. I–VII, 1891–1914); *Стефан Стамболов и новейшата ни история* [Stefan Stambolov and our contemporary history] (1909).

Context

If ethnographic research and the humanities in general represented a mixture of often incompatible tendencies in the period of Bulgarian ‘national revival’ (such as Enlightenment-styled collections of folklore material along with philological and historical analyses), the period after the establishment of the autonomous Bulgarian principality saw the rapid institutionalization and normalization of research. This implied a progressive marginalization of non-professional scholarship. In this context, the place of ethnography is particularly complex, and in this respect, the work of Dimitar Marinov is exemplary.

Marinov was one of the leading figures of folklore studies before the establishment of the modern Bulgarian state. From a scholarly point of view, Marinov’s work does not provide impressive results—the interpretation of the material is in general sporadic and not very consistent. The declared intention of emulating the tradition of the German mythological school remains practically unfulfilled. In general, his work represents a symbiosis of positivism and Romanticism, which was characteristic of turn of the century scholarship, not only in ethnography, but also in history. This was, incidentally, replicated in literature by a similar blend of realism and Romanticism.

Nevertheless, it is clear that his ‘Living antiquity’ is important not so much as a theoretical and interpretative endeavor, but as a vast empirical collection that aims at retrieving or reifying a supposedly autochthonous and original ‘Bulgarian worldview,’ the natural embodiment of which is to be found in the traditional way of life. Marinov combined these folkloric texts into a homogeneous narrative, creating the image of an overarching vision of the world. At the same time, he focused on various traditional patterns of thought and rituals, thus providing for Bulgarian literature and philosophy raw material and figures for later developments, which undoubtedly constitutes the greatest impact of his work. The very title of the collection, ‘Living antiquity,’ contains a strong ideological message: it stresses the continuity and the persistence of tradition, becoming a main tool for legitimizing *proper* Bulgarianness. In this way, in Marinov’s scholarly project, we come across the embodiment of the National Romantic notion of the ideal, uncorrupted, patriarchal, organic entity of the Bulgarian people. A very important emphasis in this respect is Marinov’s focus on the popular forms of Christianity, mixed with pagan Slavic and Thracian legacies, which Marinov calls ‘popular faith.’ In fact, the entire seventh volume of the collection is dedicated to “popular faith and popular religious customs.” Popular faith is defined not

only as the result of the peculiar circumstances of historical and cultural development, but also as an emanation of the singular soul of the Bulgarian people, undoubtedly considered to be the foundation for promoting an original national ontology.

Marinov worked in direct contact with the literary historian and ethnographer Ivan Shishmanov, close collaborator of **Ivan Vazov** and paradigmatic figure of the institutionalization of humanities in Bulgaria. Besides serving as Minister of National Education, Shishmanov founded the Ethnographic Museum with the active support of Marinov, who was appointed as its first director. Shishmanov believed in the great value of Marinov's work, and in 1892 arranged for copies of it to be sent to leading Slavists and institutions specialized in Slavic studies. The literary historian and ethnographer Mihail Arnaudov, professor at Sofia University and influential figure of Bulgarian humanities, considered Marinov to be a transitory figure between the collector of folkloric material of the Enlightenment type and the modern researcher. Arnaudov published a first review of Marinov in 1915 and the study 'Dimitar Marinov and Bulgarian ethnography' in 1942. This study had a decisive role in creating the image of Marinov as a key figure in the field of Bulgarian ethnography.

BM

Living antiquity

Preface

It is needless, in my opinion, to discuss the importance of ethnographic exploration and research or even the usefulness of the ethnographic material collected in this way. I only feel I have to add this: the issue of our national unity and the boundaries of the Bulgarian homeland would have looked differently had the works of folklore from all over our homeland been collected; our language, in orthographic and syntactic terms, would have enjoyed a situation other than that of today had the treasures of the various dialects within the entirety of our language been collected; the language and terminology used in our textbooks would have been closer to the pure Bulgarian language had we collected the diverse names and terms which are to be found in the language of our peasants, whether they were of objects or of acts and phenomena; the history of our Revival would have been planted in a different, more independent and familiar soil, much unlike its subordinated position today, had all the plentiful facts about the life and deeds of our histori-

cal personalities been collected, instead of having these facts die out together with our elderly people.

Indeed, the few ethnographic materials that have been collected, by ourselves or by foreigners, are found in ethnographic collections or are scattered in various magazines and journals, and I think that we are still miles away from our goal and that much work is still required. What is more, I think that in collecting these ethnographic materials, we have not taken the one and only proper course.

We collect songs, stories, proverbs, riddles and other such things, and publish these, thinking that with this we have studied our people.

I do not know what the others may say, but it seems to me that we shall have essential ethnographic records, valuable for science and ethnography, only when we come to know in what rites, customs, cases and circumstances our people sing these songs, tell these stories and use these proverbs; when we come to see how the peasant eats, in what is he dressed, what his beliefs are, how he is born and married, how he enjoys himself, cures himself, and dies; when we come to see and know the peasant woman inside and outside her home as a housekeeper, wife, mother and worker; when we come to see our peasant in his community and family as a property owner, husband and father, and out in the fields as a worker; that is, in short, when we come to know all aspects of the life and daily labor of our peasant.

Translated by Elena Alexieva

Introduction to book VII: Popular faith and religious popular customs (1914)

In this book XXVIII of the 'Almanac of Folklore and Ethnography,' I am publishing book seven of my ethnographic material with the approval of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. That book has already been published with the title 'Living antiquity.' In the books of 'Living antiquity' that have already been published, I included only ethnographic material collected in West Bulgaria (in the regions of Vidin, Kulata, Belogradchik, Berkovitsa, Lom, Vratsa, Oriahovitsa, i.e. in the old province of Vidin). With the seventh book, I am starting the publication of the ethnographic material which was collected throughout our entire kingdom with a supplement consisting of those materials collected in the regions of Odrin and Macedonia, which has already been published in our almanacs and specifically in the 'Almanac of Ethnography, Scholarship and Literature.'

I entitled that material 'Popular faith and religious popular customs.' It consists of two closely related parts.

Part one: 'Popular faith' includes the notions, the beliefs, the views and the people's cult of the visible and the invisible world, atmospheric phenomena, fauna, flora and material culture.

Part two: 'Religious popular customs' contains the material which presents and gives explanations of the rituals, the festivities and the customs performed to honor those creatures which popular belief created in the visible and the invisible world.

I entitled this material 'Religious customs' to differentiate it from the other social customs which constitute our common popular law, civic and penal and which were published in my previous works: books four and six of 'Living antiquity.'

I divided the first part in two: 'The visible' and 'The invisible' world.

In the first part, i.e. in the visible world, are presented the concepts, the views and the beliefs of the people about the distant unreachable world: the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars and the different atmospheric phenomena—wind, rain, snow, etc., i.e. the popular astronomy and meteorology, to the extent that these objects and phenomena could be included in the field of popular beliefs. Furthermore, in the same part are presented the notions, the views and the beliefs related to the proximate visible world, the environment in which man lives and the objects which are close to him, including plants, animals, the home and the household as well as the tools which are used in everyday work, i.e. the popular flora, fauna and the popular material culture.

In the second half of the first part, i.e. in the invisible world, I introduced the material, which comprises the notions, views and the beliefs related to God and the good and the evil spirits (angels and devils); the invisible creatures, both good and evil, who govern the destiny of man and intervene in each step of his everyday life; the diseases embodied in living invisible and super-human creatures; the soul, the after life and the notions of sin, and, similar to these, the notions which belong to the field of the spiritual and the invisible.

All aspects of the spiritual world of our people are presented. In the notions and the beliefs related to diseases, which are represented as living beings, I present the popular remedies, but only to the extent that they are an element of popular belief.

The second part, 'Religious customs,' includes our popular calendar, because it is ordered according to the popular Orthodox festivities throughout the year, but does not include those which are performed according to the

timetables of stock-breeding and agriculture or any other domestic and female occupations, or even around birth, marriage and death, since those customs which are of entirely religious nature will be described subsequently in my other works.

Part of the material is included in the first and the third book of 'Living antiquity,' but only in a very abridged version, because that material was collected only in West Bulgaria, while the material presented in this book is very detailed and, as I noted, has been collected in the whole kingdom with the addition of the material collected in Macedonia and the region of Odrin, to the extent it has been published in our almanacs.

I have collected directly and in person the entirety of this material from the people competent in such matters, i.e. the elderly women and men whose names I mention on every occasion. [...]

Critics may notice one deficiency—the melodies of the songs are missing. I am aware myself of this incompleteness, and in the future it will become even more evident. This is first because the melodies thus far recorded have not been registered entirely correctly and those minute details and nuances which are characteristic of our folk melodies are missing, and second because the old musicians and singers are dying out. It was not possible to correct this incompleteness, because I was forced to resign from the museum while I was traveling for the purpose of recording both these songs with the help of a gramophone as well as the wonderful and beautiful dances—the *rachenitsa* and other chain dances—with a cinematograph. With only my own personal resources, the collecting of this material was absolutely impossible.

I would like to ask the management of our ethnographic museum not to spare any expense in the collection of these precious materials, which are threatened by extinction.

Translated by Alena Alexandrova

ZSOLT BEÖTHY: THE SMALL MIRROR OF HUNGARIAN LITERATURE

Title: *A magyar irodalom kis-tükre* (The small mirror of Hungarian literature)

Originally published: Budapest, Athenaeum, 1896

Language: Hungarian

The excerpts used are from *A magyar irodalom kis-tükre*, (Budapest: Athenaeum, n.d. [1930]), (seventh edition), Introduction, pp. 4–9.

About the author

Zsolt Beöthy [1848, Buda – 1922, Budapest]: writer, literary historian. He stemmed from a Protestant gentry family, his father was Zsigmond Beöthy, prominent writer, jurist and politician. He studied in Pest, Vienna, and Munich. After working at the Ministry of Finance for four years (1871–1875), he became a secondary school teacher. After 1878, he started teaching literature at the University of Budapest. In his youth, he also wrote novels and short stories. Later on, he became a prominent personality of the Hungarian academia and also an acclaimed public figure whose voice was characteristic of the 1895–1896 Millennium festivities commemorating the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin in the ninth century. In 1903, he became member of the Upper House of the Parliament. He was the first president of the ‘Hungarian Society of Literary History’ (1911–1919). His works of literary history were of extremely high esteem at the turn of the century. While his strictly academic oeuvre failed to have a lasting impact, Beöthy’s construction of the history of ‘national literature’ influenced the historical consciousness of the middle class and the cultural discourse of the interwar period.

Main works: *A magyar nemzeti irodalom történetének ismertetése* [Overview of the history of Hungarian national literature] (1877–79); *Magyar balladák* [Hungarian ballads] (1885); *A tragikum* [The Tragic] (1885); *A szépprózai elbeszélés a régi magyar irodalomban* [Prose narration in old Hungarian literature] (1886–1888); *A magyar nemzeti irodalom története* [A history of Hungarian national literature] (1893–1895); *A magyar irodalom kis-tükre* [The small mirror of Hungarian literature] (1896); *A művészetek története* [A history of the arts] (1903).

Context

Based on a series of lectures Beöthy held in 1895 and 1896, 'The small mirror' was written in the context of the euphoria of the Hungarian Millennium of 1895–1896, marked by the optimism of *fin-de-siècle* Hungarian 'imperialism.' The cultural-political discussions of the last twenty years of the nineteenth century were about the question of the capability of Hungarian society to turn the country, with a population of over 50 percent ethnic non-Hungarians, into an 'organic' nation-state. Ideologically, the period was marked by a combination of a historicist understanding of national evolution going back to the liberal nationalist tradition and an increasing stress on ethnic characteristics, albeit not in a strictly biological sense. Along these lines, Beöthy sought not only to establish the canon of Hungarian literary history, but also to forge a philosophy of the history of literature and to create a basis for a national characterology. In many ways, the text is thus an attempt to underpin the assimilatory conception of nation-building, while preserving the continuity of the 'Hungarian race.'

The book offered an encompassing picture of the spiritual development that allegedly culminated in the late nineteenth century, the golden age of 'national classicism.' This period came to be perceived as an 'Augustan era': fusing the *topoi* of national Romanticism with the grandeur of classicism, stressing the harmonious relationship of national and universal aspects of culture. Beöthy's narrative was an unprecedented success; it was published in a shortened English and French version serving as an ideological 'guidebook' of the Millennium festivities and was re-edited six times in the subsequent quarter of the century. In a way, it became the master-narrative of the official nationalist educational and cultural program. Although it basically elaborated on the commonalities of the Protestant 'Independentist' (that is, traditionally anti-Habsburg) cultural-political canon, it managed to break through the usual denominational limitations and became formative for a large segment of both academic and popular cultural production. On the whole, it is a key example of the transfer of Romantic *topoi* to the canon of institutionalized 'nation-building.' Characteristically, Beöthy chose not to update this overview in the subsequent editions, and froze the picture at the turn of the century, unwilling to include the emerging new trends of literary Modernism (which he described as a "mongrel culture").

The introduction of the book represents an attempt to grasp the ethnic-spiritual roots of Hungarian culture. Starting with the iconic image of the Volga horseman, staring at the remote horizons on the steppe, it seeks to de-

duce the psychological and cultural characteristics of the Hungarians from this substrate of nomadic culture. This culture, in Beöthy's opinion, was marked by the strong collective solidarity, the force of contemplation, tranquility, transparency, and honesty. Implicitly, these features are contrasted to another national characterology (the German one), which accentuates the desire for 'exploring the unknown.' While in the first edition the ethnic terminology was less precise, in the second edition from 1900 Beöthy used explicitly the discourse of Turanism, which linked Hungarians with Turks, Bulgarians, Central Asians and even the Japanese, placing the military, nomadic and self-governing features of the ancient Hungarians into this pan-nationalist framework. This is markedly contrasted to the Finno-Ugrian theory, so much so that Beöthy even declares that the Ugrian substrate was an assimilated alien community dominated by the most archaic 'Turkic' layer.

The core of his argument is that this powerful combination of ethno-cultural peculiarities was crucial in determining the history of the subsequent centuries. This history was marked by a constant process during which ethnic aliens were assimilated into the body of the Hungarian nation, which, nevertheless, preserved its traditional institutions of liberty and constitutionalism. Beöthy's discourse of national character stresses the spiritual and political markers as constitutive, and claims that the Hungarians' most important feature is their permanent preoccupation with the public sphere. This political nationhood, precisely because it was institutional and not so much ethno-cultural, was an ideal framework for assimilating newcomers. Thus, Hungarianness is based on common geographical determinants, institutions and, most importantly, a common history. This does not mean, however, that the Hungarian ethnic character was submerged completely. According to Beöthy, the nation was historically constituted, but, nevertheless, molded by the 'Hungarian race.'

This construction, linking a supra-ethnic assimilationist understanding of nationhood to an ethnic characterology, practically lost its relevance after 1918, with the collapse of 'historical Hungary.' At the same time, the symbolism devised by Beöthy could be used by the nationalist ideologues of the interwar period without much readjustment. The image of the steppe horseman in-between Europe and Asia and the *topoi* of national characterology allegedly based on the features of the Hungarians conquering the Carpathian Basin became key references of various mainstream and alternative projects of defining 'Hungarianness.'

The small mirror of Hungarian literature

From the mist of ancient times, a figure of a horseman emerges before our eyes, standing quietly on the lowlands of the Volga valley, watching. A peaked fur-cap rests on his head while his muscular waist, clad in panther-skin, seems to stem from his small horse. With eagle eyes, he looks across the seemingly endless plain whose every point is sharply lit by the bright disk of the sun. He is calm; he has no fear and no fancies. What matters for him is only what he sees, and his eyes, inured by distant images of the plains and their strong light, can see clearly all that the human eye can see from one point. His quiver is cast on his shoulders; his Persian sword is at his side: he watches for the enemy. If there are only a handful of them, he'll brave them; if they come in groups, he'll bring tidings of their approach to the others. It is for them, the others, that he keeps watch, and he flinches from nothing. He can fix his eye on the far distance that is said to be boundless, in a faraway black spot he can recognize the eagle, the strong and cruel bird of his god, feasting on a carcass. A good omen; he caresses the neck of his horse Ráró, and rests his steady hand on the sheath of his sword. He awaits the future and he feels, he knows that their common cause shall require his strength. His soul is filled with the sense of this strength and with his devotion to his race.

The image of this solitary horseman goes to explain much not merely of the way of life of the ancient Hungarians but the essence and development of the Hungarian spirit. The entire spiritual life of the Hungarian nation is permeated by the natural and moral influences that prevailed in its ancient living conditions and took root in its soul. This nation originally belonged to the ancient great community of the Central Asian people, a people united by the hereditary and formative influence of soil, climate and a way of life, and today usually called *Turanian*. Like the Huns and the Avars, it was a tribe of nomadic horsemen of the plains; and the flat environment surrounding it with its vast extent, clear lights and few colors served to improve, rather than anything else, their contemplative power, the clarity of their discernment, the vividness and steadfastness of their perception and judgment. And also their self-confident calm, for they hardly had a reason to fear any danger approaching unperceived. Indeed, they developed these attributes rather than the desire to grasp the unknown, the ability to approach it, the vague imagination and, with its undulations and games, the submersion into the current of emotions. A nation small in number, even together with the strangers gathered around it; it was the struggles of self-preservation, the combats with men much more than with nature that required, engaged and developed all of

its inner and outer strengths. Besides a whole series of Greek and Arab authors from the ninth and tenth centuries, the first period of its life in the new homeland goes to prove that it subsisted more or less on the spoils of war. The prime interest of the community as well as the individual was closely tied to martial excellence: whatever they needed in life was to be acquired mainly by the sword. Thus the nation, or at least parts of it, was perennially compelled to fight; and well-nigh everything these warriors possessed was won by their valor and might. This personal prowess, rectitude and readiness to confront anything, all of which arise from the nature of combats of the plains, has become and remained to this day the nation's characteristic trait and thus its ideal. It characterizes not just its behavior in war but the whole of its moral concept of life. Hungarians apparently owe these traits to the Turkish components that, merging with the more numerous Finno-Ugrian peoples, their kinsfolk through the ancient Turanism, had forged it into a nation. And it is probably also to the Turkish component that they owe their ancient letters or runes, whose popular usage may be traced until as late as the seventeenth century. But the Turks also gave the name of one of their tribes to them, a name that, according to Vámbéry, means "ruler" or "powerful one," whereas Hunfalvy derives it from a word for 'son of the earth.'¹

Without a strong sense of interdependence, the personal valor of the individual would not have been sufficient to defend, conquer and sustain the territory of a small nation. From ancient days throughout the whole of its history, in all times and all hardships, during wars and internal strife abetted by outsiders, its very existence as a nation was threatened; and this fact developed in its members an exceptional propensity for paying attention to a common national interest and a willingness to make sacrifices for it. This characteristic willingness is related to the particular way that their heroic ideal was formed and took root in their soul. Apparently, they are always more inclined to serve the national interests to their utmost by mobilizing all their strength, by risking their lives than by renouncing any lesser interests. Hungary's constitution, its free institutions, its counties and its parliaments emerging from the encampments of the nation all intensified this trait, the vivid and active sense of national interdependence. As early as the Middle Ages, the public interests of the nation, particularly in the face of foreigners, engrossed the attention of everyone in Hungary, the mighty and the small

¹ Ármin Vámbéry (1832–1913): orientalist; Pál Hunfalvy (1810–1891): linguist, ethnologist, historian. These were the two main authorities on Hungarian pre-history and the steppe cultures in the second half of the nineteenth century.

alike, to such a degree that Otto of Freising² found this trait of the Hungarian soul worthy of special mention, comparing it to the political passion of the ancient Greeks. The whole outer and inner life of the Hungarians is guided at all times by this presence of the public interests and a national sentiment. Despite, or perhaps because of, the proverbial 'national curse' of constant dissent, their history bears witness to the power of this perennially effective concentric force. Parties and denominations as distant as possible from each other in their notions are still united in this inspired public feeling, and the most ardent personal and party conflicts could never lead to the division of the country and the nation.

This trait is manifest characteristically and prevalently in the whole course and in all branches of their spiritual life: their poetry, their science and their art. Their whole way of thinking as well as their imagination are inspired by this national sentiment. Whatever this nation transplants from the culturally more advanced West, these concepts and forms are always, consciously or instinctively, *altered and remolded in order to make them the most suitable to serve the Hungarian national interests*. Indeed, this very percept is a chief principle of our thousand-year-long development, shedding light on the depths of the Hungarian soul and at the same time revealing the relationship of our cultural life to our politics as well as to foreign cultures.

These ancient features of the Hungarian spirit and their constant prevalence are even more interesting as the nation emerged from the mixing of various races, and thrived through the ceaseless assimilation of foreign elements.

It could imbue with its martial ideal the Ugrian fishermen and hunters as well as the peaceful settlers driven here by the vicissitudes of war in the West; it could establish in Italian and German newcomers, torn away from their original national ties, a deep and strong national sentiment; it could win over the Turks, Cumanians, Bulgarians, Pechenegs from the East, peoples full of discord and savagery, to its culture already adapted to the West, channeling their strength for the service of this culture and for national unity. In their soil and their climate, most of the territories in the new homeland resembled the steppes of their old dwellings, and the organization of the nation took form and evolved in a direction that guaranteed the influence of its members in public affairs and thus sustained and cherished their eager participation in them. The rising legal status of foreigners and immigrants de-

² Otto of Freising: German bishop and chronicler of the twelfth century. In his *Gesta Friderici Imperatoris* he included his eye-witness accounts on the Hungarians.

pended on merits that meant in actual fact an adaptation to the Hungarian soldierly and political spiritual type—merits that were at the same time accessible for everyone.

The Hungarian soil, the sky, the institutions, the history continuously developed and spread the Hungarian spiritual type, even beyond the boundaries of the Hungarian race in its narrower sense, among all those who have lived for centuries in this history, on this soil, under this sky, amidst these institutions. *The present Hungarian nation has been shaped throughout the course of history; yet it has been shaped by the Hungarian race and shaped in its own likeness.*

It was this race that guided its history that established its objectives; indeed, the race created it, and strove to vindicate itself with it. Whomever this race linked to itself through its history and institutions has become imbued with this spirit, and became part of it.

Thus the nature of the Hungarian soil, the dominion of the Hungarian race with its public institutions, the character of Hungarian history, the Hungarian language, whose forms the Hungarian mind has shaped in its own way—all these, despite the unceasing intensive mingling of races, have sustained, at least in its main features, the original Hungarian spirit. Assimilated foreigners, knights and warlike nomadic troops as well as settled farmers and craftsmen have in most parts become Hungarian not only in their language, as the large masses of Slavic population that had already been living here did, or as the Turkish peoples would later, but in their soul as well.

And this development is made all the more astonishing by the fact that almost since the beginning, the military, political and religious motives of dissimilation—wars, party conflict, national and sectarian oppression and persecution—have afflicted the purest, most deep-rooted Hungarians most inauspiciously. Here we encounter the marvelous phenomenon that while there is hardly a nation in Europe manifesting such a strong and almost unceasing blending of the most diverse peoples; at the same time, there is hardly any one that has preserved the spiritual character of the founding race so faithfully and unmistakably despite all this mingling. The classic testament to this proposition is our literature.

Translated by Dávid Oláh

ŞEMSEDDİN SAMİ: TURKISH LEXICON

Title: *Kamus-ı Türki* (Turkish lexicon)

Originally Published: Istanbul, İkdam Press, 1900

Language: Ottoman Turkish

The excerpts used are from the seventh edition of the reprint (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1999), pp i–vii.

About the author

Şemseddin Sami (Sami Frashëri) [1850, Frashër (present-day southeast Albania) – 1904, Istanbul]: linguist, lexicographer, novelist, and playwright. The multifarious Ottoman intellectual was born in the village of Frashër, then in the province of Yanya (*Gr.* Ioannina, *Alb.* Janina). He is the brother of Abdül (Abdyl) Bey (politician) and Naim Bey (poet), two important names in the formation of the Albanian nationalist movement. In 1868, Sami was sent to Zossimea, a Greek gymnasium in Jannina, where he learned ancient and modern Greek, French and Italian. He also acquired fluency in Arabic and Persian by taking private lessons. In 1871 he moved to Istanbul and started working in the Government Press Office as a translator. In 1876, he started publishing the *Sabah* (Morning), one of the most prominent newspapers of the period. In 1872, he authored one of the earliest novels in the Ottoman Turkish language, *Ta'aşşuk-ı Tal'at ve Fitnat* (The love affair of Tal'at and Fitnat), where traditional male–female relationships in Ottoman Muslim society are addressed critically. At the same time, Sami deserves to be called the most important ideologue of the Albanian nationalist movement. Between 1877 and 1881, along with his brother Abdül and other Albanian-born members of the Ottoman elite, he actively participated in the founding of various Albanian cultural clubs and organizations that promoted the rise of national consciousness among Albanians. He was among the founders and an active member of the *Komiteti Shqiptar i Stambollit* (The Albanian committee of Istanbul) and also the founder in chief of *Shoqëria e të Shtypurit Shkronja Shqip* (The Albanian printing association). It was through his inspiration that a new Albanian alphabet was prepared on the basis of the Latin and Greek scripts. Also significant for the Albanian national movement is the political manifesto that he wrote (under a pseudonym) in 1899, *Shqipëria*, where he promoted the idea of full autonomy for Albania within the Ottoman Empire. Sami was indisputably the most competent Ottoman scholar using the Turkish language. His 'Turkish lexicon' (*Kamus-ı Türki*), still a standard reference for studies involving Ottoman Turkish, was a monumental achievement for its time with its technical rigor and its

careful deployment of modern linguistic protocols. A vocal advocate of simplification in language, Sami Bey contributed tremendously to the development of a modern, more vernacular form of academic and literary expression in Turkish. Interestingly, due to his diverse intellectual output and multiple cultural and political allegiances as an “Ottoman Albanian,” Şemseddin Sami is venerated as a significant national figure both in Albania and in Republican Turkey. Sami Bey’s multiple ‘national’ persona is sufficient proof to the complex realities of a multicultural empire imperiled by the ordeals of mounting nationalism.

Main works: *Ta'aşşuk-ı Tal'at ve Fıtnat* [The love affair of Tal'at and Fıtnat] (1872); *Besa yahud ahde vefa* [Pledge of honor or loyalty to an oath] (1874); in Albanian: *Besa ose mbajtja e fjalës së dhënë* (1875); *Kamus-ı Fransevi / Dictionnaire Français-Turc* (1882); *Kamus-ı Fransevi / Dictionnaire Turc-Français* (1885); *Abetare e gjuhës shqipe* [Elementary Albanian] (1886); *Shkronjëtoe e gjuhës shqipe* [A grammar of the Albanian language] (1886); *Kamus-ı Türki* [Turkish lexicon] (1900); *Kamusü'l-a'lam / Dictionnaire universel d'histoire et de géographie* (1889–1896); *Shqipëria ç'ka qënë, ç'është e ç'do të bëhet* [Albania—what it was, what it is and what it will be?] (1899).

Context

Şemseddin Sami’s introduction to his ‘Turkish lexicon’ is by far the most elaborate commentary written on the state of the Turkish language at the end of the nineteenth century. In a matter of few pages, Sami Bey highlights the essential problematics and dilemmas of formulating Turkish as a modern national language. At the outset, he tackles the problem of corroborating the linguistic identity of Ottoman Turkish, which he classifies as a branch of what he calls the larger “Turanian” family. Awareness about the organic links between western Turkish and other languages of the Altaic group was by no means new (not to mention the theories developed by European linguists, predominantly Hungarians, about the relationship between Turkic languages and those of the Finno-Ugric group). Possibly informed by A. L. David’s pioneering work, *Grammar of the Turkish language* (London, 1832), the Ottoman bureaucrat and intellectual Ahmed Vefik Paşa acknowledged in his Ottoman dictionary, the *Lehçe-i Osmani* (The Ottoman dialect) (Istanbul, 1876), the identity of the Ottoman language as a distinct “dialect” of the larger Turkish group. Şemseddin Sami is unique and original though in undertaking an incisive scholarly discussion as to the specific relation of the eastern and western branches of Turkish, their separate paths of development and their dynamics of divergence. His answer to whether these two alienated branches constitute separate languages is firmly negative (although, one should note here that for the sake of this argument Sami Bey generalizes the

myriad Turkic languages of Asia under a single ‘eastern’ category). For Şemseddin Sami, all variants of the Turkic family, no matter how far they stand in terms of grammatical structure and vocabulary, comprise a single language. Foreshadowing the pan-Turkist agenda of linguistic unity, Sami Bey calls for a new rapprochement between the two literary realms and expresses his regrets for years of negligence on the part of Ottoman intellectuals who severed their ties with the east.

Moving beyond the designation “Ottoman language” employed in previous dictionaries and grammars written by Ottoman authors, Sami Bey identifies his work as a lexicon of the “Turkish language.” His broad and more homogenized definition of Turkish language extends not only over geographical and political barriers but temporal ones as well. Using the first person plural “we,” he talks about the establishment of Turkish as a written literary language centuries before the advent of the Ottomans. The nationalist implications of Şemseddin Sami’s views on the relationship between language and cultural identity, no doubt, carry the insights gained by years of study and propagandizing on the Albanian language and national identity. Still, it is important to note that his discussions were also conducted within a heated and ongoing debate on the history and future of the Turkish language that occupied many Ottoman intellectuals throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the last decades of the century, works of certain European Turcologists, such as Leon Cahun and Ármin (Arminius) Vámbéry, stimulated a new awareness among inquisitive Ottoman minds about the historical existence of a broader Turkic civilization. A nascent debate about the linguistic and literary implications of envisioning Turkish civilization on a global scale was galvanized further by the writings of a number of Turkic intellectuals from the Russian Empire who were active within the literary and scientific circles of the Ottoman capital (the most prominent of these being İsmail Bey Gasprinski from the Crimea and Mirza Fath Ali Ahundov from Azerbaijan). Nevertheless, what may be called the cultural phase of an incipient Turkish nationalism, to which Sami Bey greatly contributed, was still largely curtailed by the predominance of the official Ottomanist line mandated by the pre-modern realities of a polyglot, multi-ethnic empire. The ambivalence created by these conflicting and coexisting forms of dynastic and nationalist allegiance in the late Ottoman domain can be witnessed clearly in the complex political standpoint of Sami Bey. Like many other members of the vast Ottoman conglomerate, Sami Bey had to contend with multiple layers of genuine loyalty when it came to matters of national self-identification. An avid defender of cultural distinctiveness and an active promoter of na-

tional consciousness (both Albanian and Turkish), the Ottoman-Albanian intellectual still saw no reason to forgo his loyal and resolute advocacy of the Islamic and Ottoman basis of the Empire. His complex sense of national loyalty is best expressed in a newspaper article where he contended that his “public homeland” (*vatan-ı ‘umumi*) was the Ottoman Empire, while Albania was his “private homeland” (*vatan-ı hususi*).

The *Kamus-ı Türki* represents the epitome of the late Ottoman effort towards clarifying orthography, systematizing spelling and increasing the popular intelligibility of written Turkish. A slow but consistent process of linguistic reform was among the consequences of the *Tanzimat*’s broad administrative, social and cultural transformation. The centralizing state, with its novel agendas on public education and administrative efficiency, sought ways to simplify the usually over-embellished official style (the publication of a modern Ottoman grammar in 1851 was a distinct outcome of the new policy on language). In the meantime, enhanced means of public communication, the rise of an Ottoman intelligentsia and the development of new and Europeanized literary forms ushered in a new journalistic and literary style that eliminated, in varying doses, the Arabic and Persian elements embedded in literary tradition, favoring, in turn, forms and expressions derived from spoken Turkish. Within the radical reformist faction of the Ottoman intelligentsia, the language debate spawned an outright attack on the entire literary tradition and even occasioned proposals to abandon the Arabic-based Ottoman script.

Following the labyrinthine post-*Tanzimat* search to delineate the boundaries of Ottoman Turkish as a modern language, Şemseddin Sami’s introduction to the ‘Turkish lexicon’ stands as a crowning achievement of scholarly rigor. The author’s call for restoring the ‘authenticity’ of the western Turkish idiom represents a vital step forward in terms of the process of nationalizing language. Sami Bey argues that the ‘purity’ of Turkish can only be regained by eliminating the foreign elements encumbering the literary style, and reintegrating ‘genuine’ Turkish words derived from the ‘less corrupted’ eastern dialects. In other words, foreshadowing the severe transformative agenda launched by the Republican language reformers, Sami Bey envisions a national linguistic renaissance constructed upon the ‘unsullied’ Altaic roots of western Turkish. Yet, steering clear of the rigid and militant type of purism that was to be practiced by his Republican successors, Şemseddin Sami makes a tactful case of welcoming and protecting the eclectic richness of Turkish as a living language. Very perceptively, he acknowledges the organic capacity of any language to appropriate foreign words and make them its

own. The prudence that Şemseddin Sami displays in defining the larger prospects for Turkish linguistic regeneration is indubitably a sign of his superior intellectual acumen and erudition. But it could also be argued that, at the same time, it was the ambivalent and multi-layered political identity of the author that nourished his non-militant wisdom and provided room for cultural lenience.

AE

Turkish lexicon

Introduction

A nation that seeks to elevate its tongue to the level of a literary language, or to preserve its literary character, should endeavor to obtain a complete lexicon and a methodical study on grammar. While this is a generally acknowledged fact, and a confirmed starting point for all civilized nations, we, having possessed a written and literary language for a thousand years, failed to produce a comprehensive lexicon and a proper grammar book that gathers and establishes the rules of our language. Due to our own fault and neglect, our Turkish language, which in itself is quite rich and extensive, lost a considerable portion of its vocabulary and turned into a language so narrow as to lack any means of articulation without resorting to Arabic and Persian, and subsisting with a vocabulary so corrupt and colloquial as to have the roots and etymology of its words left in complete obscurity.

It is common knowledge that Turkish belongs to the Turanian family of languages spoken in the entire northern part of Asia. At present, while Turkish is used extensively throughout these regions, one branch of the language that extended westward is spoken in the two large and beautiful subcontinents joining Europe and Asia, namely Anatolia and Rumelia.

Therefore, Western, or Ottoman, Turkish should be distinguished from its eastern counterpart, incorrectly known as *Chaghatay* Turkish. In terms of its expressive capacity and mode of pronunciation, Western Turkish has acquired a particular charm and elegance lacking in its eastern counterpart, which must be attributed to the innate and local propensity of our region for progress and civilization. However, in borrowing and appropriating many words and expressions from Arabic, Persian, and foreign languages such as Greek and Italian, Western Turkish lost and abandoned a large proportion of its vocabulary. Being exposed to the influences of these languages, our language departed somewhat from its original Turkish idiom.

Still, contrary to the general assumption, the difference between Eastern and Western Turkish is not such that the two can be considered entirely separate languages, as in the case of Italian and Latin, or Spanish and French. The difference is comparable to that between northern and southern German, or Tuscany Italian and Neapolitan, or Egyptian and Maghrebi Arabic. Eastern and Western Turkish constitute one language, they are both Turkish.

While this is the case, for seven or eight centuries, from the initial stages of the separation, all contact and intercourse between the speakers of the two branches of Turkish have been severed. Instead of attempting to get closer and unite, the literati of the two sides chose to diverge and clash. Moreover, the two sides have been completely estranged from each other through the adoption of entirely different methods of orthography, styles of writing and expression. Thus, with eight hundred years of oblivion, ignorance and neglect, the two branches of Turkish appear today as if they were two separate languages.

The question is, which one of these two branches transformed and deviated more and which one remained in its original form since the initial separation? Investigation would clearly reveal that Eastern Turkish remained and continued more or less in its original form, while our Western branch underwent profound transformations through the ages, consequently acquiring its present form. Now, are we to call this particular sort of transformation progress or corruption? I believe there is neither a fully positive nor a fully negative answer to this question. With this transformation, our language improved in certain respects and degenerated in others. The elegance it gained in its pronunciation and style of expression, and the breadth it acquired through the adoption of Arabic, Persian and other foreign words, must certainly be considered aspects of progress. Yet, western Turkish departed to a certain extent from the harmony that constitutes the fundamental canon of the Turanian languages, and spawned words and idioms that blatantly defy this canon. While leaving thousands of genuine Turkish words in the depths of oblivion, our language resorted to other languages and turned into a melange of tongues. These, without question, spell corruption.

In sum, it seems that eastern Turkish is relatively coarse in terms of its pronunciation and style of expression, while our western branch is much more refined. Yet, as regards rules and fundamentals, eastern Turkish is correct, and ours corrupt. Although western Turkish is far richer due to the words and terminology it borrowed from other languages, *Chaghatay* Turkish gains the upper hand when we only consider the pure Turkish words and expressions employed in both sides. [...]

It is my humble opinion that a perfect lexicon of Turkish should include all words that are genuinely Turkish. Nevertheless, very little effort has been displayed so far with regard to the recording and compilation of the vocabulary of our language. While the names and biographies of lexicographers from other nations and communities fill volumes, no one in these lands considered to engage in a scientific career of this kind. To this day, the vocabulary of our language remains almost unrecorded. Thus, in order to create a perfect and comprehensive Turkish lexicon, one not only needs to study the entire written output of this language, but also needs to take long trips to all the lands where Turkish is spoken, converse with all classes of people having a good hold of their language, and hence, produce an all-inclusive documentation of Turkish vocabulary. [...]

One of my most heartfelt desires was to compile pure Turkish words, especially the more valuable and useful ones that are neglected and forgotten in our case but still employed in eastern Turkish, and reintegrate them into western Turkish by facilitating their revival and dissemination. Yet, there exist very few individuals, driven by their feelings of national and racial affection, who would prefer these pure terms to their more ostentatious Arabic and Persian equivalents. Hence, widespread opposition to the idea forced me to abandon this significant project. [...]

[Still,] it is impossible to conceive a dictionary that merely contains genuine Turkish words and leaves out Arabic and Persian words and terminology that are appropriated and commonly used by Turkish speakers. This would compare to the ridiculous task of preparing an English dictionary and leaving out half of its vocabulary deriving from French. The ‘Turkish lexicon’ should include all the words and terminology that complement and enhance Turkish, while avoiding the obscure Arabic and Persian words, commonly favored by the authors of oversized “Ottoman” dictionaries, which are barely used even in these languages, let alone Turkish.

Perhaps some would object to the designation of a work that contains commonly used words of Arabic and Persian origin as the ‘Turkish lexicon.’ Yet, our language is Turkish, and it would be absurd to call a dictionary of this language otherwise. Each and every word used in our language, regardless of its original source, must be considered a part of Turkish, provided that it is truly common and habitual for its users.

Translated by Ahmet Ersoy

EUGEN LOVINESCU: THE HISTORY OF MODERN ROMANIAN CIVILIZATION

Title: *Istoria civilizației române moderne* (The history of modern Romanian civilization)

Originally published: vol. I *Forțele revoluționare*, vol. II *Forțele reacționare*, Bucharest, Ancora, 1924, vol. III *Legile formației civilizației române*, Bucharest, Ancora, 1925

Language: Romanian

The excerpts used are from Eugen Lovinescu, *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, Zigu Ornea ed. (Bucharest: Minerva, 1997), pp. 5–6, 10–13, 352–354.

About the author

Eugen Lovinescu [1881, Fălticeni (Moldavia) – 1943, Bucharest]: literary critic and historian of literature. Lovinescu completed his primary and secondary education in Fălticeni, where his father was a professor of history, and Iași. From 1900 to 1902, Lovinescu was a student in classical philology at the University of Bucharest. He studied with the historians Grigore Tocilescu and **Nicolae Iorga**, and the literary critic **Titu Maiorescu**. In 1903, after having graduated, he became a professor of Latin in Ploiești. It was during this period that Lovinescu began contributing to various newspapers, including the conservative *Epoca* (The epoch). In 1904, he went to Germany with the intention of studying archaeology, but in 1906 he decided against this and moved to Paris instead. In 1909, Lovinescu submitted his doctoral dissertation at the Sorbonne. During his studies in France, Lovinescu contributed to various journals with articles that were later collected in his *Critice* (Critiques). In 1912, he was refused the chair of modern Romanian literature at the University of Iași. During the First World War, Lovinescu stayed in Bucharest, but after the German occupation of the capital in 1916, he moved to Moldavia. In 1918, he returned to Bucharest, where in 1919 he established the modernist journal *Sburătorul* (The winged one) and formed a literary circle which remained active until 1947. Important Romanian modernist authors like the mathematician and poet Ion Barbu (1895–1961), the novelist and playwright Camil Petrescu (1894–1957), and the Romanian-born essayist and avant-garde poet Ilarie Voronca (1903–1946) benefited from Lovinescu's support to launch their careers. Between 1920 and 1924, Lovinescu published various monographs and completed his 'Critiques.' In 1924 he published the first volume of 'The history of modern Romanian civilization.' Despite his repeated attempts, Lovinescu

did not manage to become a university professor and remained a high school teacher until 1938, when he retired. Moreover, in 1936, his candidacy for admission into the 'Romanian Academy' was refused (Nicolae Iorga accused him of denigrating **Mihai Eminescu's** legacy). In the interwar period, Lovinescu's impact on cultural debates was restricted to his literary circle and the journal he edited. Although he was integrated to the national canon after 1945, and became a key reference in the debates on the autonomy of the aesthetic sphere in the 1960–70s, Lovinescu's ideas came under criticism during the 1980s, when autochthonist authors accused him of undermining Romanian creative originality and asserting instead the cultural superiority of the West.

Main works: *Critice*, 9 vols. [Critiques] (1910–1923); *Istoria civilizației române moderne*, 3 vols. [The history of modern Romanian civilization] (1924–1925); *Istoria literaturii române contemporane*, 6 vols. [The history of contemporary Romanian literature] (1926–1929); *Antologia ideologiei junimiste* [An anthology of Junimist ideology] (1942).

Context

The creation of Greater Romania in 1918 had a powerful impact on the development of Romanian culture. The task of reorganizing political parties, public administration and the economy was paralleled by a series of debates on the role of culture in the new state. Although the responses to these challenges of political and cultural integration were diverse, two main currents were discernable: the Europeanist and the traditionalist (or the autochthonist). The former considered Romanian culture in a larger European context. As such, it advocated immediate modernization as the only way to bridge the gap between Romania and Western Europe. The latter trend was rather critical of rapid modernization. Its supporters suggested that Romania was an agrarian country, whose model of development should be based on her rural cultural heritage. The debate between Europeanists and traditionalists reached new dimensions in the 1930s. Among the Europeanists, two authors achieved prominent status: the liberal theorist and economist **Ștefan Zeletin** and Eugen Lovinescu. Both authors connected Romania's political and economic progress to the changes brought about by the 1848 Revolution and the instauration of the constitutional monarchy (1866). However, while Zeletin described economic and social causes, Lovinescu emphasized the transformation of ideas and cultural trends.

'The history of modern Romanian civilization' represents Lovinescu's most elaborate analysis of the formation of modern Romanian culture. Essentially, Lovinescu argued that modern Romanian civilization emerged in the

first half of the nineteenth century. It was with the generation of 1848, however, that Romania was systematically and extensively exposed to Western European ideas. This generation undertook the task of importing and imitating Western institutions and methods. Nevertheless, Lovinescu further claimed, the imitation was not pursued uncritically, as these intellectuals hoped to achieve a 'synchronic' balance between Western ideas and Romanian realities. 'Imitation' and 'synchronism' are the two principles dominating Lovinescu's sociology of culture. Imitation, as an explanatory sociological mechanism in the formation of societies, was a very fashionable concept at the time, particularly in France, as illustrated by French sociologist and social psychologist Gabriel Tarde's *Les Lois de l'imitation* (1890). Following Tarde, Lovinescu assumed that human psychology was the only modality to grasp social mechanisms whereby society functioned as a cohesive entity. According to Tarde, 'imitation' and 'innovation' were the two guiding forces of society, controlling and shaping social activities.

The interplay between imitation and innovation not only regulated the functioning of society but also generated a new cultural condition, one which Lovinescu named synchronism. This phenomenon explained the ways in which Western ideas were imitated and appropriated by Romanian intellectual and political elites. Lovinescu subsequently enunciated seven phases of imitation, each governed by its own sociological laws. During the first phase, Romanian elites used imitation as the main means of introducing Western ideas into Romanian culture. This imitation occurred without Romanians questioning the nature of things they adopted, as evidenced by the second phase of cultural development. However, in the third phase a 'critical spirit' also emerged, becoming active during the fourth phase. The presence of the critical spirit did not stop the 'process of imitation'; instead it questioned its validity. According to the law of innovation, a nation's originality was not the result of spontaneous creativity (as traditionalist authors claimed), but the effect of adaptation and relocation of ideas and cultural models. Any imitation eventually took a specific national form. During the fifth phase, imitation occurred, albeit according to a different mechanism than the one described by Tarde. For Lovinescu, the substance (Romanian culture) imitated the form (the West). In this way, Lovinescu described the sixth phase, when it became clear that imitation was not only confined to the present time; it could be projected into the past as well. In the case of nations without a cultural past (like Romania), traditional ideas were "sociologically impossible" as they were largely the consequence of cultural developments elsewhere. Nevertheless—as the seventh phase demonstrated—the lack of this norma-

tive cultural past created, essentially, the propitious conditions for modern Romanian civilization to emerge. In conclusion, Lovinescu believed that due to its synchronic nature (the result of both processes of imitation and innovation) Romanian culture was inevitably moving towards the West, and the Romanians would at some point become ‘true Europeans.’

Generally described as one of the most outspoken of the Romanian modernists, Eugen Lovinescu played a rather atypical role in the debate between the Europeanists and the anti-Western traditionalists during the interwar period. He framed his vision about cultural modernization and the role of the state differently than his contemporaries. In the debate on Romania’s cultural role in Europe, Lovinescu’s suggestion of adopting Western European values in their entirety as well as his unflagging critique of Slavic influences and implicitly of Orthodox Christianity were met with reticence even by some of the pro-Europeanists. Although invoked during the 1980s, when Romanian national communism orchestrated a general appropriation of traditional currents within Romanian culture, it was during the 1990s that Lovinescu and his program of cultural transformation were integrated within a proper framework of discussion about European modernity in Romania.

MT

The history of modern Romanian civilization

Both by ethnic composition and geographic position, the Romanian nation is at the boundary of two worlds: the East and the West. Of course there are no pure races, only historical races; they are the expression of a common ideal rather than of unaltered blood. “*Das Deutschtum*,” said Paul de Lagarde,¹ “*liegt nicht im Geblüte, sondern im Gemüte*” (The German nation does not lie in blood, but in spirit); Latinity does not represent a somatic formula, but a mental structure. Whatever the mixture of blood that went into the composition of our race, the Latin mentality configures it characteristically and definitively. If tragic historical circumstances had not pinned us down for too long in the moral atmosphere of oriental life—Roman soul in a sound Illyro-Thracian body—we could have entered, from the beginning,

¹ Paul Anton de Lagarde (1827–1891): German biblical scholar and orientalist, attempted at creating the national German religion based on radical nationalism and antisemitism.

like other Latin peoples, into the orbit of Western civilization. However, historical conditions orientalized us; through the Slavs south of the Danube, we received the spiritual forms of the Byzantine civilization. [...]

The most active ferment of orientalization was Orthodoxy. At a time when differences between people were made mostly in terms of religion rather than race, it placed us in danger of melting into the large mass of southern and then eastern Slavs. Behind the cross, Cervantes said, hides the devil; behind the Byzantine cross the Russians were hidden. Connecting us spiritually to an obscurantist religion, stiffened in its patterns and formalism, Orthodoxy imposed on us a foreign liturgical language and a foreign alphabet (Latin thoughts expressed in Cyrillic print!), failing to help us create a national culture and art. [...]

We not only owe to western influence the first Romanian translations and printings, and therefore the very formation of our literary language, but also the creation of our national historiography and of the true Romanian literature. Moldavia's cultural contact with Poland, the time spent by the boyars' sons or the boyars themselves traveling in Poland, had a significant impact on the national language, culture and even conscience. The appearance of Grigore Ureche² and his compiler, Simion Dascălul (Simion the Teacher),³ Miron and Neculae Costin,⁴ Ion Neculce and later Dimitrie Cantemir,⁵ some of whom had been to Polish schools, almost all of whom knew Latin, aware and proud of their Roman origin, some erudite, others with an important literary talent, made seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Moldavia, under the influence of western culture filtered through Catholic Poland, the real starting point not only of a superior culture, but also of the dissemination of Romanian language in the darkness of Slavic and Greek Orthodoxy. Polish influence was not confined to contributing only to the creation of a national historiography, but it was also a principle which helped the dissemination of the Romanian language into the organism of state life. [...]

It is almost redundant to mention that, from the cultural point of view, the entire eighteenth century was dominated by the unification of some of the Transylvanian Romanians with the Latin Church. However disappointed in

² Grigore Ureche (c. 1590–1647): Romanian chronicler from Moldavia.

³ Simon Dascălul: teacher at the 'Trei Ierarhi' School in Iași.

⁴ Miron Costin (1633–1691) and Nicolae Costin (c. 1660–1712): Romanian chroniclers and humanists from Moldavia.

⁵ Ion Neculce (c. 1672–1745): Romanian chronicler and politician from Moldavia; Dimitrie Cantemir (1673–1723): Romanian philosopher, geographer and historian, as well as twice the ruling prince of Moldavia.

their political expectations they might have been as a result of this event and whatever the diplomatic game of Austria in Transylvania, its cultural importance dominates the entire business of unification: through contact with the very source of our nation, Rome, our national conscience was strengthened. In defense of their race, the “three knights of the national ideal,” Samuel Micu, Gheorghe Șincai and Petru Maior, worked hard to produce numerous historical and philological papers. With the Latin print, they also brought the exclusive principle of Latinism. From the vision of the eternal city, therefore, started the Latinist current which fecundated science, and especially the conscience of the Romanian nation, just as from the schools of Rome and Vienna came Asachi and Lazăr⁶ to prepare the souls of the Romanians in the Principalities for the great changes of the nineteenth century.

So far, the contact with the West had been accidental and indirect through the Hussites, the Lutheran Saxons, by means of religious propaganda, through the Poles, by cultural means, and finally through Rome, that is by religious and cultural means. Through the Treaty of Adrianople (1829), through the exile of the Romanian youth especially to Paris, the nineteenth century established direct and fruitful contact with the social ideology of the French revolution; through the interdependence of contemporary cultural and economic life we suddenly escaped from the yoke of eastern cultural forms, to enter in the circuit of the western material and moral life. With its help, we created the national unity in the form of a state of western civilization.

Since the West was a genuine environment of development for the new Romanian spirit, through the identification of race and mentality, in judging it, we cannot agree with some traditionalist historians who hold that “however much we may love it for its courageous and rich culture, our life and our ancestors’ life links us to the East. Our roots and all our merits are here. Our mission is indicated by these, by their age and greatness: undeniably, the first.” The East is, undoubtedly, a force of the past, not of the present. [...] The ancient civilizations appeared in the East; hence: *ex oriente lux*! When on the ruins of the “ethnic chaos” of the Roman decadence there appeared the German blond as a configuring principle of new nationalities and civilizations, the light came from the north: *ex septentrione lux*! From the perspective of our century and our place, the light comes from the West: *ex occidente lux*! [...]

⁶ Gheorghe Asachi (1788–1869): writer, educator, and founder of *Academia Mi-hăileană* in Iași in 1835. Gheorghe Lazăr (1779–1821): writer, educator and founder of the first Romanian language school in Bucharest in 1818.

At the end of all these developments, it is the place to sum up in a few words our findings. Latin and therefore with the spiritual virtues of all Latin peoples the Romanian people, by its geographical position, its historical conditions, and by religion, was fixed from the beginning in an eastern environment, altogether opposed to its intimate structure, and the major moments of its cultural and national development, throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was determined by intermittent western influences. The history of modern Romanian civilization started in the nineteenth century, that is with the integration of our contact with the West and with the change of our environment of formation; the revolution of 1848 represents, symbolically speaking, the major moment of this new intellectual, economic and political orientation. [...]

This process of importation of all forms of Western civilization, with the corollary of the contrast between form and essence, noted by all researchers of our civilization, was criticized by the *Junimists*, too, who set it from the perspective of evolutionary development, and was also raised by the Marxists who, looking upon any political-social structure as a creation of an economic structure, are in fact also evolutionists. In reality, however, the process of formation of our civilization—like of all states that suddenly encountered a much more advanced life—is not evolutionary, but revolutionary. Without doubt, and whatever the reserves we employ in looking upon it, it results from a sociological necessity that we have proven with sufficient developments: if in the course of past centuries with so few means of inter-penetration, the forms of intellectual and social life can be reduced to a unitary spirit, the process of unification through leveling has become the characteristic of modern civilization. The principle can be fixed in the formula of synchronism of contemporary life, which despite all apparent differences, is reality itself, while the belief in the possibility of development contrary to the spirit of the age is merely the starting point of some temporary perturbations. Like with other underdeveloped nations (and I studied the cases of Russia and Japan), our civilization can only develop revolutionarily, i.e. suddenly, through integral importation and without the reconstruction of all stages of evolution of the developed peoples' civilization by means of organic growth.

Starting from the point of synchronism which dominates my entire work, the Romanian civilization developed after the laws of imitation, namely:

Moving from top to bottom, imitation found in the superior layers the element through which the ideas of the West were disseminated even when they were in opposition to class interests.

Keeping in mind the revolutionary nature of our formation, through sudden contact and difference in level, imitation took in our case a new integrative character; we thus borrowed the forms of the west without distinction, in mass, and not in the deliberative light of the “critical spirit.”

This integrative character is perceived, of course, only in the first purely revolutionary phase of imitation; in the second phase, in which we had entered a long time before, the role of the “critical spirit” is uncontested.

As the number of “inventions” or “original ideas” of a people is very limited, it can be stated without exaggeration that imitation is the first form of originality in the sense that through adaptation to the temperamental unity of the race, any imitation, in time, gains a specific character. The originality of our civilization, like the civilization of most people, does not rely, therefore, in “elaboration,” but in adaptation and processing.

Imitation does not act, as Tarde sustained, from the inside, but from the outside, in other words, from form and with a likely tendency toward essence. The first part of this statement is obvious and therefore void of any appreciation; the second, however, as it regards us, is a truth on the go, and the unique possibility for the development of young civilizations. Imitation is not only in the present, but it can be focused on the past as well, thus constituting traditionalism, which in its strict sense is impossible unless it can be related to an epoch of integral national expansion.

Translated by Mária Kovács

BOYAN PENEV: HISTORY OF NEW BULGARIAN LITERATURE

Title: *История на новата българска литература* (History of new Bulgarian literature)

Originally published: Sofia, Държавна печатница, 4 vols. (1930–1936), ed. by Boris Iotsov

Language: Bulgarian

The excerpts used are from the second edition: *История на новата българска литература* (Sofia: Български писател, 1976), vol. I, pp. 468–470, 477, 500–501.

About the author

Boyan Penev [1882, Shumen (east Bulgaria) – 1927, Sofia]: literary critic and historian. He completed his secondary education in Rousse and graduated from the ‘Department of Slavic Philology’ at Sofia University in 1907. He became a professor in the ‘Department of Bulgarian and Slavic Literature’ at Sofia University in 1917, and then department chair in 1925. Between 1923 and 1924, he gave lectures on the history of Bulgarian literature in Poland (in Cracow, Warsaw and Lwów (*Ukr.* Lviv). Close to the circle around the modernist periodical *Мисъл* (Thought), Penev was, together with its leading figure Krastiu Krastev, one of the main proponents of the modernist approach to literature and culture in general. His modernism and positivism were aligned with liberal political views. Descending from a family of modest social status, Penev was an exemplary figure for the new Bulgarian intellectual elite, which, in contrast to that of the first post-liberation generation (coming mainly from the urban elite), comprised people from all social strata. This generation shared common cultural standards imbued by the national educational institutions. Penev married Dora Gabe, the most important Bulgarian poetess at the beginning of the century. She came from a renowned Jewish Levite family, which had moved to Bulgaria from Russia. Gabe converted to orthodoxy to get married to Penev in 1908. Penev dedicated a series of influential works to the history of Bulgarian literature and to contemporary literary development. He also contributed to the debate on national culture and especially to discussions regarding the relationship between the people and the intelligentsia. His important essay ‘Our intelligentsia’ became one of the formative texts of the Bulgarian cultural project as a whole. Penev championed the idea that the Bulgarian people and its elite latently possess the best qualities of all European nations. However, he argued that their fulfillment could be achieved only through conscious efforts and well-formulated common aims. Penev’s ‘History of

new Bulgarian literature' is considered to be the most important modernist interpretation of the national literary canon.

Main works: *Начало на Българското Възраждане* [Beginnings of the Bulgarian national revival] (1918); *Паисий Хилендарски* [Paissy Hilendarski] (1918); *Българска литература. Кратък исторически преглед* [Bulgarian literature. A short historical review] (1930); *История на новата българска литература* 6 vols. [History of new Bulgarian literature] (1930–1936).

Context

In the first histories of modern Bulgarian literature, where the national canon was first constructed (Marin Drinov, **Ivan Shishmanov**, Alexandar Balan), the monk Paissy Hilendarski (1722–1773) is considered to be the first author of modern Bulgarian literature. More generally, Paissy's figure was established by Romanticism as a founding figure of the Bulgarian national revival. A significant example of the use of the figure of Paissy in Romanticism is **Ivan Vazov's** ode 'Paissy,' placed at the beginning of his national canon-building work 'Epic of the Forgotten.' Paissy Hilendarski wrote the famous *История славеноболгарская* (Slavo-Bulgarian history) (1762) during his stay in the Khilandar (Hilandar) Monastery on Mount Athos. Thanks to this seminal text, the first Bulgarian history in the contemporary, vernacular language, Paissy was ascribed the role of the 'creator of new Bulgarian literature' in the national canon. Also in literary history, Paissy is considered to be the creator of the modern Bulgarian literary language. In fact, on a discursive and generic level, his text shows features relevant much more to the rudimentary and petrified medieval rhetoric, typical of the monastic schools. He also used the tradition of the popular Bulgarian *дамаскинари* (damaskin) authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Iosif Bradati, for instance), ecclesiastical literature, and also humanist authors writing in Latin or Italian. The 'damaskin' literature (after the name of the Greek author Damaskenos Studites, who wrote the book 'Treasure' – prototype of all its subsequent variations), produced between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, represented the most important trend in the secularization of literature before the revival period (the 'damaskins' being written in vernacular language), although it remained strongly influenced by the thematic scope and the generic structure of monastic hagiographical writing.

Boyan Penev, similar to Benyo Tzonev in the nineteenth century, opposes this view. Penev sees the beginning of new Bulgarian literature as a cumula-

tive process. At the same time, he also depicts the individual figure of Paissy as the first incarnation not only of the revival of the national spirit, but also of its first modern articulation. In other words, Penev is one of the first historians trying to interpret Paissy as the first Bulgarian Enlightener. In accordance with the Tainean model, Penev focuses on the extra-literary factors which effected the formation of the literary work, but at the same time puts at the center the individual figure of Paissy, thus reiterating the main modernist archetype. The compromise between external determination and individual predetermination is particularly pronounced in the analysis of Paissy's work. According to Penev, Paissy stands as a 'predetermined bearer' of national consciousness in the given historical moment. What is more, being an incarnation of the national soul, Paissy is at the same time its active principle: "from the depersonalized and apathetic slave, he wanted to create a Bulgarian; he aimed to trace in the consciousness of the generations the ways of the future."

With his reinterpretation of the Bulgarian national canon, which, in its turn, became canonized in the following decades, Penev establishes an individualist version of national literature and culture in general. Undoubtedly, the way he approached Paissy's figure and oeuvre is paradigmatic in this respect. At the same time, this 'individualist' modernist vision is related to the idea of the fundamental interrelation of the individual's mind and the nation's soul. It is implied in all of Penev's historical works that the 'national' poet gains his individual value mainly through the absorption of the national spirit—the ultimate subject of every creative act.

BM

History of new Bulgarian literature

Volume I, Chapter XIV: Paissy Hilendarski

In the first place, the motives behind Paissy Hilendarski's writing this history are quite typical of his character. The main fundamental motive must be sought not in chance circumstance and outside ascendancy—at any rate we have no established information about such circumstance—but in Paissy himself, in his individual peculiarities, and mostly in his *national sentiment and awareness*. Paissy's legacy is unthinkable without that sentiment and awareness which cannot be instilled from the outside as ready-made psychological forms but ensue from a deeper spiritual life. Outside influences, of course, were not lacking, their meaning cannot be denied, but in this instance they are an occasional factor, nowhere as crucial as Paissy's individual spirit.

If the nascent national awareness found its first concentrated expression in Paissy rather than someone else, this concentration was aided by favorable inner conditions of a personal character. We see no accident here. In the history of our Revival, Paissy is the first major figure with a clear awareness of the *nationality* he belongs to, of the spiritual neglect of that nationality and the means of its awakening. Paissy vividly felt the sorry plight of his people. In this he resembles those sympathetic poets gifted with a near-painful sense of nationality, poets only born in times of great national disaster. Paissy felt the suffering of his people, he felt it even deeper than the people itself—so strong his love for his compatriots was; he felt the bitter insults inflicted by Greeks and Serbs, he felt this humiliation as his own. One of the few revivers of our national spirit, he considered it his irrevocable duty to endure and redeem the suffering and humiliation of his people. With moving naïveté he hints in the epilogue at the most intimate motive that made him write the history of Bulgarians: “I was gradually consumed by zealousness and pity.” How eloquent this simple phrase “consumed” is, how its spontaneity reveals Paissy’s national feeling! His zealousness and pity were so strong that no obstacle could divert him from the firm decision to restore the former glory of his people, to write its history, as the title says, “for the good of the Bulgarian race.”

“Thus I disregarded my headache and stomachache from which I had been suffering for a long time—I did so out of the great desire I had.”

Here we see the same candor, the same spontaneity which speak so well of the nature of Paissy’s feelings, not only in the explicit phrase, but in the tone of that phrase as well: “I did so out of the great desire I had.” Paissy could not possibly express his intimate attitude towards the Bulgarian more naively and sincerely. The same attitude is revealed in the famous appeal to his countrymen in the opening of ‘Slavo-Bulgarian history’: “I took great pains to collect [material] from different books and histories until I managed to put together the history of Bulgarian people for your benefit and praise. I wrote it for you who love your kinfolk and your country and who love to learn about your people and your tongue!” [...]

Paissy’s national awareness is characterized by a deep faith in the future of his people. This faith and the readiness to do something for the awakening of the forgotten Bulgarian tribe reveal the optimism that sustains his will and energy, the optimism discernible in his indignation at the ongoing Bulgarian ignorance and indifference as well as in his relative sorrow. Here the awareness is motivated by a particular outlook on historic reality, by a certain, shall I say, enlightened cheerful and hopeful feeling.

Paissy's national sentiment and awareness are directly related to his sagacity and keenness of observation. Here we see yet another motive for the writing of 'Slavo-Bulgarian history.' The following consideration reveals some of the directions and dimensions of this watchfulness and sagacity—the Greek oppression keenly infringed on the material and spiritual interests of the Bulgarian population, which it held in ignorance, without a clear notion of the plight it was in. Who rose against the Greek clergy and Greek aspirations? Not those who suffered material damages and were exposed to the baneful Greek influence, but a monk from a distant monastery in Mount Athos, a hermit who closely watched the life of his compatriots, seeing the dangers they were exposed to, foreseeing the fatal consequences of foreign spiritual domination. Another equally characteristic feature explaining some fundamental aspects of 'Slavo-Bulgarian history' is Paissy's *practical thought*, on one hand, and his *social activity*, on the other. Paissy was well aware of the roads that would lead the Bulgarian people to new life and of that personal and social energy, of the strenuous efforts needed to awake the long-slumbering national spirit. The very intonation of the *History*, the form it uses to express its patriotic tendencies—not to mention its content—portray Paissy as a gifted public figure and propagandist. As such, as we shall later see, he had all the necessary qualities—loyalty to his people, insight into the conditions of social life, sagacity and a remarkable oratory gift manifested in his sincerity, in his ardent and persuasive words. [...]

Yet we should not forget that the external conditions, whatever they might have been, only prompted Paissy to implement an idea conceived by favorable factors of an intrinsic rather than extrinsic character. The writing of 'Slavo-Bulgarian history' was motivated mostly by Paissy's national sentiment and awareness, by his love for his kinfolk, by his sagacity and social activity, of which in that particular historical moment he seems to have been the destined bearer. [...]

As we noted Paissy's attitude to Ottoman oppression, it would be relevant to point out its poorly developed but characteristic *political tendency*. Paissy stops to draw attention to the plight of Bulgarians under Turkish rule and to emphasize the wrongs it brings upon them. With this in mind, we can say that the 'Slavo-Bulgarian history' has stirred not only desires to preserve the Bulgarian language and nationality through education and active resistance to Greek aspirations, but also ideas and feelings of a political kind. In fact the very historical representation of former political independence was already an indirect comparison of past and present, which inspired the Bulgarian readers with thoughts of political freedom. And yet we must note that politi-

cal tendencies do not come first in Paissy's history. Its author aimed primarily at disclosing the spiritual rather than the political yoke, at inciting his countrymen against the Greek spiritual oppression. Therefore, as we pointed out, he persuades Bulgarians to value their language and to defend their nationality against foreign aspirations. Through history, through the idealization of the past he tried to wake them up for a new life. He idealizes their past in order to show them that they are not what they used to be; he reveals the gloomy reality of the present in order to incite them to fight for their spiritual freedom, warranted by the former feats and human dignity of the Bulgarian people. He peers into the past and into the present, searching for their historical meaning, setting its people tasks that must be accomplished promptly, revealing its duties, its responsibility to history and the future. Persuading his countrymen that they should restore themselves to their former glory, fight for their differentiation, for the preservation of those spiritual blessings that helped them rise among the other peoples—instead of leading a pointless and torpid existence for centuries on end. From the nondescript languid *slave* he wanted to create a *Bulgarian*; he tried to draw the path for the future in the minds of the new generation. Here lies his greatest achievement, an achievement that seems unusual, outstanding and even unbelievable for those dark times of slavery.

Translated by Zornitsa Dimova-Hristova

AFET İNAN: PROLEGOMENA TO AN OUTLINE OF TURKISH HISTORY

Title: *Türk tarihinin ana hatları: Methal kısmı* (Prolegomena to an outline of Turkish history)

Originally published: Istanbul, Devlet Matbaası, 1931

Language: Turkish

The excerpts used are from the original, pp. 1–2, 5–6, 8–11, 69, 73–74.

About the author

Afet İnan (Ayşe Afetinan) [1908, Selanik (*Gr.* Thessaloniki, present-day Greece) – 1985, Ankara]: scholar and national activist. She was a recent graduate of the ‘Bursa Teacher’s School’ when, in 1925, Mustafa Kemal met her in İzmir and took interest in her education. The same year, she was sent to Lausanne by the government to learn French. Upon her return in 1927, she became a history teacher at the newly founded ‘Music Teachers’ School’ in Ankara. Thereafter, under the directives of Mustafa Kemal, she dedicated her entire academic life to the mission of elaborating, explaining and proving the Republican ‘History thesis,’ based upon a monogenistic glorification of the Turkish race as the source of all human civilization. In 1930, hoping to promote her as the intellectual mouthpiece of the immanent ‘cultural revolution,’ the Republican leader assigned the young and inexperienced teacher the task of delivering the opening speech in the ‘Sixth Congress of the Turkish Hearths.’ The congress was followed by the founding of the ‘Turkish Hearths Committee for the Study of Turkish History,’ entrusted with the task of delineating a workable outline of Turkish history that would act as the template for history textbooks. Within months, the committee produced the 600-page ‘Outline of Turkish history,’ edited by Afet İnan. İnan also participated actively in the foundation of the Turkish Historical Society (1931) and served as its vice-president for many years. She eventually received her doctoral degree in anthropology from Geneva (1938) under the supervision of the eugenics advocate Eugène Pittard. Her thesis was based on an extensive anthropometric study of 64,000 skeletons from Anatolia and Thrace, conducted in 1931 with the support of the Ministry of Health, through which İnan claimed to demonstrate the phenomenon of racial continuity in Turkey from the Neolithic Age to the Modern era. İnan is considered to be an ‘adopted daughter’ of Mustafa Kemal, although this was never registered in official terms. As her guardian, intellectual supervisor and confidant, the Republican leader made her the first female scholar to

join the ranks of the revolutionary elite. Afet İnan is considered to be among the founders of early Republican nationalism. A prominent icon of the Kemalist regime, she represented the active and emancipated Turkish woman, serving the needs of the Republic with a strong and unwavering sense of indebtedness.

Main works: *Vatandaş için medeni bilgiler* [Civilizing norms for the citizen] (1930); *Türk tarihinin ana hatları: Methal kısmı* [Prolegomena to an outline of Turkish history] (1931); *Türk halkının antropolojik karakterleri ve Türkiye tarihi* [Anthropological characteristics of the Turkish people and the history of Turkey] (1947); *The emancipation of the Turkish woman* (1962).

Context

By the beginning of the 1930s, following two brief experiments in multi-party democracy, the ruling Republican People's Party (hereafter, RPP) founded by Atatürk had fully confirmed its monopoly on power. Marked by increasingly nationalistic and authoritarian leanings, the single party regime (inspired by the rising tenor of fascism in European politics) sought to establish the ideological foundations of the secular Turkish Republic. Thus, under the directives of the unassailable leader Mustafa Kemal, the far-reaching cultural revolution of the new Republic (regulating and transforming all areas of daily life, from dress to the alphabet) was consolidated and extended into the academic realm. The ultimate aim of the positivist ruling elite was to mobilize scholarly fields such as history, archaeology, anthropology and linguistics, and corroborate the 'deep historical roots' of Turkish national identity in 'scientific' terms.

While the Republicans seemed to deny the role of race and ethnicity in the construction of a "harmonious, unified and classless society," the question of ethnic origins and character (first elaborated in the writings of **Yusuf Akçura**) remained an essential ingredient in the making of modern Turkish national identity. What the young Republic needed at this point was a new 'myth of origins' that went beyond the now largely dispossessed Ottoman past, and revealed the superiority, rootedness and ethnic purity of the Turkish nation. Hence, with the explicit directives of Mustafa Kemal, a 'Committee for the Study of Turkish History' was founded in 1930 within the institutional framework of the 'Turkish Hearths' (a pre-Republican organization that acted as the locus of early Turkish nationalism). Composed mostly of high ranking bureaucrats and a limited number of scholars (such as Afet İnan and Yusuf Akçura), the Committee was assigned the mission of synthesizing the general outlines of a comprehensive history of the Turks, the propagation

of which would be enabled by all government agencies (the people's houses, schools and ministries). The agenda of the study group was divulged personally by Mustafa Kemal to Afet İnan in the following terms: investigating the pre-Ottoman and ancient history of the Turks, revealing their crucial role in the forming of world civilization and proving to the world that the Turks were a white, Aryan race (with no connection to the uncivilized Mongols or the secondary 'yellow race') which was equal in status to the Europeans.

In a matter of months, under the editorship of Afet İnan, the committee produced the 605-page 'Outline of Turkish history' (only a hundred copies were published so as to be presented to experts and the Kemalist coterie). Although the Republican inner circle was well aware of the severe shortcomings of this haphazardly assembled document, it was nevertheless approved as the first draft of the official narrative on the national past, and considered to be a preliminary sourcebook for the design of new history curricula for elementary and high schools. The primary objective of the study was described as follows in the Introduction: "To reveal the mysteries of the Turkish genius and moral character, to demonstrate to the Turk himself his own uniqueness and power and to explain that our national development is embedded in deep racial roots." In 1931, as the 'Turkish Hearths' were appropriated by the RPP and the Committee turned into an 'Association' (soon to evolve into the 'Turkish Historical Society'), thirty thousand copies of an abridged version of the text, the 'Prolegomena,' were published and used as a supplementary textbook for high schools.

Although inspired by the works of some nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Orientalists, the fundamental argument of the 'History Thesis' was largely unfounded and speculative. It maintained that in prehistoric times, the 'original homeland' of the Turks in Central Asia (roughly demarcated by Transoxania, the Hindu Kush Mountains and Lake Baikal) housed an immense inner sea which nourished the first civilized farming societies of the world. It is claimed that in the Neolithic period the drying up of the sea due to changing climactic conditions caused a massive wave of migrations from Central Asia. Hence the Turks, ancestors of all brachycephalic,¹ Indo-Aryan societies, spread their superior talents and culture to different parts of the world (from the Americas to Africa), kindling the ancient civilizations of China, India, Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Aegean and Asia Minor. The theory not only helped inscribe the Turkish nation in a distant and venerable past,

¹ Denoting a short and broad skull form, associated in physical anthropology with the Indo-Aryan races.

but also initiated what was soon to become a popularly established narrative on its perpetual state of ‘migration,’ conceived as a grand civilizing mission that played a fundamental role in the history of human progress. The ‘in-seminating’ role of the Turks was also observed in the realm of language. Within the confines of the ‘history thesis,’ Turkish was distinguished as the ur-language that had a formative impact on the major languages of the Ancient world (the First Language Congress of 1932 was to be followed by the launching of the ‘Sun Language Theory,’ which defined Turkish as the world’s oldest language).

The ‘History thesis’ was expected to constitute an essential building block in the formation of Kemalist ideology and perform as a fundamental instrument in the cultural organization of the nation state. Claiming to operate within academic and positivistic parameters, it helped define and confirm Turkish national identity in ethnic and linguistic terms. Thus, the ‘Outline,’ as the founding document of the ‘Kemalist history thesis,’ reveals a complex cultural agenda that also bespeaks of the deep-seated dilemmas and insecurities of the early Republican politics of identity. The major challenge of the endeavor undertaken by İnan and the Committee was to reconcile the demands of a locally defined, ethnocentric and self-celebratory nationalism with the broader transformative program of fully integrating with Western civilization and becoming European. By fabricating the image of proto-Turks as prime movers in the founding of great ancient civilizations, the ‘History thesis’ helped ‘naturalize’ and appropriate the entire edifice of Western civilization, while implicitly contesting the Eurocentric biases and the pro-Hellenic exclusivism of the standard narrative on the origins of ‘world history.’ Extending Turkish presence and glory back into the prehistoric period was not only a means of boosting national pride, but it also contributed to the secularist bracketing of the Ottoman past as one among many episodes in the broader history of national success. Furthermore, in identifying the Aegean and Anatolian societies of the Ancient period (the Minoans, Mycenaeans, Trojans, and the Hittites) as being of pure Turkish stock, the Committee helped define the Turks as the autochthonous population of Anatolia, hence thwarting the claims of other rooted ethnicities (Greek, Armenian, Kurdish) on what was now considered to be the true Turkish homeland (cherished in tandem with the ancient and indistinct homeland in Central Asia).

Although designed to denounce the Eurocentric biases of western historiography and promote a vision of eternal Turkish superiority, the ‘Outline of Turkish history’ was harshly criticized by many reputable (and sternly nationalistic) Turkish scholars for being deceptive and outright racist. Never-

theless, the 'Prolegomena' was used as a preliminary template for designing a new range of elementary and high school textbooks on Turkish history. Although major revisions were made in these textbooks (especially by the Education Council of 1943, which had more moderate and universalistic leanings), to this day, the predominant trope of 'ancient Turkish migrations' endures, with the accompanying maps that illustrate a complex web of arrows radiating to the world from the Inner Asian steppes.

Among the significant and lasting impacts of the 'History thesis' was its stimulating role in the development of Turkish scholarship on the history and archaeology of Ancient and Classical Anatolia. Ankara University's 'Faculty of Letters, History and Geography' was instituted in 1935 with the intention of generating scientific testimony for the 'History thesis.' Yet, while the initial momentum of the official thesis declined rapidly after 1937, the institution flourished as a major center of original research in fields such as archaeology (many new surveys and excavations were conducted around Anatolia and Eastern Thrace), philology (the curriculum included courses on Ancient Greek, Latin, Hungarian and Chinese) and anthropology. The new emphasis on 'Anatolian civilizations' also engendered a more inclusive brand of nationalism based on land, counterbalancing, albeit in limited scale, the highly ethnocentric overtones of the Republican mainstream. A peculiar intellectual offshoot of this tendency was the 'Blue Anatolia' movement, initiated in the 1950s by a group of left-wing cosmopolitan intellectuals. Dedicated to disseminate in Turkey the universal values of Humanism, members of the 'Blue' movement promoted the image of Anatolia, the true homeland of Western Turks, as a unique melting pot of myriad cultures, and as the essential wellspring of all Mediterranean civilizations.

AE

Prolegomena to an outline of Turkish history

The Turkish homeland

The area encircled by the line starting from Great Khingan Mountains to the Baikal basin, through the Altay Mountains, the Itil basin, the Caspian Sea basin, the Hindu Kush, Pamir, Karakorum and Kunlun Mountains and the Yellow River, reaching back again to the Khingan Mountains, is called the Central Asian plateau. The outlined plateau is the motherland of the Turks. [...]

Thousands of years before the dawn of history, there existed vast inner seas in the Turkish motherland, which have now been replaced by deserts,

steppes, marshes and shallow lakes. The eager seeds of the earliest civilizations thrived in the shores of these very seas, and in the lovely and bountiful valleys carved by its gushing rivers [...].

In other parts of the world, while people still lived in a state of deepest savagery, inhabiting caves and tree hollows, the Turkish motherland enjoyed the civilization of wood and metal. The moment that truly and definitively separates humanity from savagery, the period of domesticating animals, started there first. Farming, the initial stage of nature's surrender to human will, began in this location. [...]

The ancient Turkish sea, extending from the Caucasus through the Tian Shan mountains to the interior of the Gobi desert in the East, was nourished by waters from the extensive glaciers that covered the grand mountains of the area. Turks thrived here, due to the favorable natural conditions of the location. [Yet,] the end of the ice age changed the climactic conditions in the Great Turkish Sea basin. Gradually, the receding ice cap withdrew to northern Asia and to its highest mountains. The waters diminished [...]. Thus, as Central Asia dried up, it was overtaken by sand, and living conditions became extremely harsh in a land that once sheltered millions of people. As the ice receded and the wide inner seas evaporated, Central Asia's doors to the west opened wide. Later, in the course of thousands of years, Central Asia became an immense human ocean that overflowed, with unremitting waves, into China, India, Asia Minor, North Africa and Europe [...]. For at least nine thousand years, the great Turkish raids and migrations continued, at times like unrelenting, gushing, devouring floods, and at times like secret streams flowing underneath the sand—all constituting a grand, civilizing movement. The underlying factors of the climactic change in question are still being investigated by several scientists. The change has also had profound effects on the history and social life of the Turks who remained in the motherland [...]. It forced a part of the Turkish race into a nomadic mode of subsistence. Nomadism emerged as a necessity in Turkish history due to pressing climactic factors. Turks who lived in suitable climactic and geographical conditions never inclined towards a nomadic way of life. [...]

China

In search of better climes, the Turks took the paths they deemed most suitable and branched out to the four corners of the world, spreading the seeds of their civilization. They fought the primitive natives they encountered, and either drove them out or civilized them by penetrating into their societies.

Through their much superior level of intelligence and advanced weapons, they encountered no problems in subjugating [the natives], settling in the land, and exercising their rule. In uninhabited areas, they settled wherever they found appropriate, and became the autochthonous peoples of these lands. [...]

Leaving aside the fabricated accounts on the origins of Chinese civilization, notoriously claiming a history of 100,000 or even 2,000,000 years, the Turks' initial advance into northern China should be taken back to 7,000 BC [...]. With the level of their cultural accumulation, their high and noble morality, and their plain and unblemished faith, the Turks developed a civilization in China that remained until the recent centuries as one of the most significant in the world. [...]

Asia Minor, Sumer, Akkad, Elam and the Hittites

When the Turks arrived in lower Mesopotamia, all the riverbanks were swamped. The talent and skill these migrating groups displayed in eliminating the damage of water through trenches, channels and systems of proper irrigation must be considered ample proof of their high level of civilization even at the time of their arrival [...]. The civilization founded by these groups is known as *Sumer-Akkad-Elam*.

Today, with ongoing research, the beginnings of Anatolian civilization have been traced back beyond 4000 BC. For at least seven thousand years, therefore, the Turks have been inhabiting Anatolia as its autochthonous population [...]. Further investigations in Anatolia will surely reveal that at the time of their first migrations, the Turks brought a highly evolved civilization to this land. [...]

The Aegean basin

A group of the Turks that moved westward found suitable areas of settlement in the eastern Aegean basin. The Mediterranean civilization is the jeweled crown of human skill and aptitude. It comprises areas and periods such as Troy, Crete, Lydia and Ionia, and can be traced back to four or five thousand years before the Christian era. The question is, who created the Mediterranean civilization, that remarkable feat of delicate splendor? What nation bequeathed the resplendent beauties of the Knossos palace to eternity? [...] Did all the brachycephalic peoples of the Neolithic Mediterranean belong to the same family? Solid anthropological evidence confirms that these

brachycephalic groups occupied the Aegean islands between the Ancient and Late Mycanean periods. Most assuredly, these people came from Central Asia, the source of all brachycephalic people in the world. [...]

False and hostile claims about the Turks

The time is over for the hostile claims and false accusations about Turks, who, allegedly, are a bellicose nation with no share in civilization, living solely with the desire to conquer the lands of others. It is time to acknowledge the uncivilized and inhuman nature of these primitive conjectures which originate from age-old Christian agendas that breed hatred and hostility among one section of humanity against another [...]. The aim of this work is to depart from historical proof and remind the Great Turkish Nation of its dignified past. For centuries, this nation has been very unfairly slandered and its service and labor in the formation of the earliest civilizations has been persistently denied. [...]

At the end of his historical speech to the nation, His Excellency Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk addressed our youth, warning them about all possible dangers the nation might face, and continued by saying: “*Child of the Turkish Future! Your duty, even amidst these dire circumstances, is to save the Republic and its independence. The power you need is embedded in the noble blood you carry in your veins.*”

With the guidance and inspiration he provided for the compilation of these notes, our *Great Leader*, the shining example of the Turks’ historical glory, added the following words to the aforementioned speech:

“Turkish Nation! You are the pride of humanity not only through your heroism and martial skills but also through your intellect and civilization. History is full of praise and eulogies to the civilizations you have founded. Although your march has been stalled and interrupted for a few centuries by the political and social factors threatening your existence, the intellectual and cultural inheritance of ten thousand years continues to dwell in your soul as an unsullied and inexhaustible force. Carrying the memories of thousands and thousands of years, history points towards the place you deserve in the ranks of civilization. Move forward and ascend! This, for you, is both a right and a duty!”

Translated by Ahmet Ersoy

VLADIMIR LEVSTIK: THE MISSION OF LANGUAGE

Title: *Poslanstvo besede* (The mission of language)

Originally published: *Ljubljanski zvon*, 54 (1934)

Language: Slovene

The excerpt used is from the original, pp. 65–75.

About the author

Vladimir (Ciril) Levstik [1886, Šmihel nad Mozirjem (*Ger.* Sankt Michael oberhalb von Praßberg) – 1957, Celje (*Ger.* Cilli, present-day Slovenia)]: poet, essayist, critic, translator and journalist. Levstik attended schools in Št. Andraž nad Polzelo, Celje, Maribor (*Ger.* Marburg an der Drau), and Ljubljana (*Ger.* Laibach). Poverty forced him to abandon his studies in 1904, when he was a seventh grade student. He then devoted himself to literature, journalism and translation. Between 1906 and 1907 he lived in Paris and became acquainted with contemporary trends in literature. He was a fervent supporter of Yugoslavism. Several years before **Ivan Cankar**'s landmark lecture entitled *Slovenci in Jugoslovani* (The Slovenes and the Yugoslavs), Levstik imagined the union of the South Slavs as a political union, not involving, however, cultural and linguistic integration. He wrote for the pro-Yugoslav papers *Jutro* (Morning) and *Ilustrovani tednik* (Illustrated weekly). In 1915, the Austrian authorities interned him in Ljubljana, and after being moved from prison to prison, he eventually ended up in Mittergraben near Vienna. The newly established Yugoslavia did not fulfill his expectations. In 1923, he joined the ORJUNA, an organization of Yugoslav nationalists, and following its dissolution three years later he gradually retreated from public activity. During the second half of the 1920s he returned to *Jutro* where he worked as the editor of the youth supplement. Although he opposed the occupation, for political and personal reasons he did not join the 'Liberation Front' during the Second World War. During the post-war years, for a certain period he was rejected by the newly established communist authority. He was soon forced to retire, receiving only minimal pension. In 1949, however, he was rewarded the prestigious Prešeren's award for translation. Owing to his political stigmatization after the Second World War, Vladimir Levstik's name was systematically omitted in literary history reviews. Today, however, his work has become a prominent subject of research, and he is considered one of the most eminent writers from the Celje region. When he died, he was given a grand funeral in Celje. The collection of his manuscripts and correspondence is now preserved at the Celje Study Library which also maintains the Levstik memorial room.

Main works: *Obsojenci* [The convicts] (1909); *Svoboda* [Freedom] (1910); *Za svobodo in ljubezen* [For freedom and love] (1913); *Gadje gnezdo* [Viper's nest] (1918); *Pravica kladiva* [The justice of the hammer] (1926); *Dejanje* [The act] (1934); *Hilarij Pernat* (1966).

Context

In 1906 following the initial success of his literary works at home, Vladimir Levstik went to Paris where he became exposed to contemporary trends in art and philosophy. His diary from this period reveals the daring quests and insights of a young, bohemian artist. His main interests included art, religion, women, and Nietzsche's philosophy. The first signs of expressionism and futurism, characterized by an awe for technology and an eye fixed on the future, can also be found in the works of his contemporary fellow writers in Slovenia. However, from Levstik's Parisian perspective the domestic artistic scene appeared as the product of a rather underdeveloped middle-class culture: "just a mini-culture, not culture, a mini-literature, not literature," he writes in his diary.

In 1910, just before the dawn of the futurist avant-garde, Levstik's poetic development was transformed by a radical turn of mind that moved him in the direction of Yugoslav nationalism. He returned to art only after the outbreak of the Second World War. In his imagination, the Yugoslav nation was a political and not a cultural union. The nationalist turn in Levstik's intellectual agenda was followed by his adherence to a single literary genre; he more or less restricted himself to narrative pieces making a single, but admirable, foray into the world of essays, which resulted in the *Poslanstvo besede* (The mission of language).

Levstik's nationalist tendency is clearly demonstrated in his work for the liberal and pro-Yugoslav newspaper *Jutro*, published in Ljubljana under the auspices of the Belgrade paper *Narodna odbrana* (National defense). Levstik rejected the Illyrian concept of Fran Ilešič, who later became the ideologist of what came to be known as integral Yugoslavism. In 1923, when ORJUNA, the organization of Yugoslav nationalists, established in Split in 1921, extended its activity to Slovenia, Levstik became one of its influential members. Although ORJUNA's initial mission was to counter Italian irredentism, Yugoslav unitary-centralist political parties (primarily the Yugoslav Democratic Party, or the Independent Democratic Party) soon turned it into an agent of active political campaigning for the unitary-centralist organization of the country, and against the communist movement. Its members were mainly

small craftsmen, traders, and members of liberally oriented sports associations. ORJUNA's program stressed the concept of solidarity and devotedness to the service of the people. Over time it acquired an increasingly militant character and was dissolved following a clash in Ljubljana between some one-hundred uniformed ORJUNA members and the police in June 1926.

Levstik, who moved to Ljubljana in 1924, declined every invitation for active involvement in Yugoslav politics following the dissolution of ORJUNA. He retreated completely from public life at the onset of the dictatorship of the Yugoslav king Alexander Karađorđević, who on 6 January, 1929, dissolved the Parliament, banned the political parties, and suspended the Constitution. Perhaps Levstik initially saw some positive aspects of the dictatorship, but in 1934, when King Alexander was assassinated in Marseilles, he became convinced that Yugoslav national politics was on the wrong track. His last novel, *Dejanje* (The act), and the essay *Poslanstvo besede*, both critical of Yugoslav cultural integralism and its derision of the Slovene language, attest to such a conviction.

In *Dejanje*, Levstik addressed the issues of totalitarian dictatorship and human freedom, two subjects that inevitably haunted the European humanists who were confronted with growing Nazism, Fascism and Communism. The essay *Poslanstvo besede*, on the other hand, was written during the time of intense self-questioning among Slovenian intellectuals regarding the role of the mother tongue in public life. In 1929, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed The Kingdom of Yugoslavia. All (Slovenian) national institutions were endangered; the Chancellor of Ljubljana University, Milan Vidmar, managed to salvage his institution by submitting it to the protectorship of the king, so the university was renamed *Universitas Alexandrina*, a name that it retained until the Second World War. In 1931, the king declared the new Constitution, which defined a single, tripartite Yugoslav nation.

The ideology of 'national unity,' already present in the Vidovdan Constitution (1921) stipulated that it was necessary to dissolve all the historical, dynastic and other boundaries that until then divided the presumably single Yugoslav nation. In fact, as early as the foundation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918, it became obvious that despite the enduring idea about the association of the Yugoslav nations, not all Yugoslav citizens shared a common sense of belonging. This was an idea close only to the hearts of certain intellectuals. In Slovenia, the resistance to the unitary approach was articulated during the early 1920s, when the Slovenian People's Party, the most influential political party in Slovenia, began to derive its political strength from a network of affiliated collectives. What tied them to-

gether was the common demand for the legislative autonomy of Slovenia within the Yugoslav state.

King Alexander attempted to legalize his dictatorship through the 1931 Constitution, which he presented as a basis for the renewed democratization of the state. The reality, however, was different. The laws passed by the Parliament in Belgrade were not valid unless confirmed by the king. The king could also dissolve the Parliament and appoint a government loyal to him. In July 1932, the king appointed Milan Srškić, notorious for his centralist views, as the head of government. It was becoming increasingly clear that Alexander's promises about the democratization of the state were nothing more than political platitudes. Although he was a devout Yugoslavist before the First World War, Vladimir Levstik was highly critical of such developments. He became one of the leading advocates of the full-fledged and uninhibited development of the Slovene language. His essay *Poslanstvo besede*, written in 1934, was one of the most passionate rejections in Slovenia of the idea of the cultural fusion of Yugoslav nations. It places Vladimir Levstik among the protagonists of national history who strove to preserve the Slovene language as one of the constitutive attributes of national identity.

MR

The mission of language

Introduction

The first thing that comes to mind when we utter the word "nation" is language. No matter how many attributes describe the concept of nation, no one is more characteristic, more indispensable or more indisputably valuable in itself than this one. Racially, a nation may be amalgamated from various elements; its historical paths can be the result of the will of others, of chances or of other influences which are not necessarily connected with its inner essence. Socially, it can be broken into various forms and classes fighting savagely among themselves; economically and politically it may have coalesced with other nations into a common structure; what is it that nevertheless distinguishes it from others? [...] What is it that makes us the same, that makes us "us," Slovenes, the Slovenian nation? Many things, some would say. However, no matter how many of these many things there are, all can change, pass away and disappear, until we are left only with our language. We are because we have had it. We will be as long as we have it. We drew on its strength and we will continue to do so, and not only in the sense of po-

litical programs that are written and erased by time, but in another, much higher sense of intellectual and natural existence; in the most realistic sense of an eternal duty to carry on, along with the rest of humankind, our share of experience and recognition, of work and fight, creation, suffering and triumph, and to conquer together with the rest of humankind and donate in a brotherly manner our share of light.

I can see that with these words I have indicated the direction of my rumination. It is not my intention to repeat the facts that can be found listed and explained in widely available books; all these things are well known and all are just dry erudition if we consider them without some principled, deeper understanding, without a live awareness of what this is all about. This is the issue about which I would like to share my thoughts with the reader. At this time when notions are clouded and people are at variance so that one can no longer see into the other's mind and heart, I'd like to seek along with the readers the answer to the following questions: if the national language is such a decisive, fateful property, where does the secret of its influence lie? Where inside us is it anchored? What is the task and the mission of language in the life of every human being, and the life and history of every nation? And finally: where are the vestiges of the mission of the Slovene language and in which direction do they point? [...]

Just like no one can choose a father to his own taste, no one can freely choose the language either; everyone has had one and the same language from the very beginning, because the language of your nation remains your own even if concealed. The legacy of our ancestors pulses through us; we are the products of the past generations in all of our physical and intellectual components. The rhythm of their destinies, of their reasoning and the manner of their feeling, their inclinations and passions were undoubtedly passed down on us transpiring as idiosyncrasies in our self-expression. [...]

Let us now have a look at the path traveled by the Slovenian nation, and the enriching, conserving and liberating mission of the Slovene language! [...] For one who lives in the most intimate atmosphere of the national language and is constantly enchanted by its breathing, this mission is the voice that never falls silent; that person knows that the mother tongue is the property of the whole nation and that to turn away from that language is to fail the nation and disavow its Spirit. For this reason, the Slovenian literary and art audience was as unanimous in rejecting the forcing out of the Slovene language as it was in supporting and greeting the union with the Serbs and Croats within the Yugoslav state [...]. The issue of Slovene is not an issue that can be resolved by politics in a worthwhile manner, nor is it an ordinary

cultural issue, but exclusively the issue of the strength of life of that language, of its development over many centuries, and the issue that will be decided by time over the long-forgotten graves of those who now raise it. A language lives until it becomes exhausted. In harmony with natural and iron inevitability, it is fulfilling its mission until that mission is completed. The mission of our language is far from being completed. [...]

This is the spirit by which the ship carrying the Slovenian language sails on. There can be no price ever, and there can be nothing and no one for whose sake we would be ready to talk about taking down its sails.

Translated by Olga Vuković

DIMITRIE GUSTI: THE SCIENCE OF NATION

Title: *Știința națiunii* (The science of nation)

Originally published: *Sociologie românească*, No. 2–3 (February–March 1937), pp. 1–7.

Language: Romanian

The excerpts used are from the original, pp. 1 and 3–7.

About the author

Dimitrie Gusti [1880, Iași – 1955, Bucharest]: sociologist, ethnographer and the founder of the ‘Bucharest Sociological School,’ or the so-called ‘Monographic School.’ Gusti was born to a family of local notables and completed his primary and secondary education in Iași. In 1898, Gusti enrolled in the University of Berlin, where he studied with the German philosopher, Friedrich Paulsen (1846–1908). From 1900 to 1904, he studied at the University of Leipzig with German scholars such as the psychologist and physiologist Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), the historian Karl Lamprecht (1856–1915) and the geographer and ethnographer Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904). In 1904, Gusti received his doctorate and returned to Romania. In 1910, he was appointed professor of sociology and ethics at the University of Iași, but in 1920 he moved to the University of Bucharest. In 1919, he founded the *Asociația pentru Știința și Reforma Socială* (Society of sociology and social reform), which in 1921 was renamed the *Institutul Social Român* (Romanian social institute). Gusti edited two of the most important scientific journals of the interwar period, *Arhiva pentru știința și reforma socială* (Journal of sociology and social reform), which in 1940 became the *International Union of Sociology*’s official journal, and *Sociologie românească* (Romanian sociology). In the 1920s and 1930s, a new generation of sociologists and ethnographers, along with specialists in various other disciplines, took part in Gusti’s ‘teams’ to conduct fieldwork in rural areas. In 1934, Gusti became the director of the Royal Cultural Foundation. In 1936 the ‘Village Museum’ in Bucharest was established with Gusti as one of its founders. Together with some of his collaborators, especially the anthropologist and social historian Henri H. Stahl (1901–1991) and the sociologist Traian Herseni (1907–1980), Gusti initiated a systematic investigation of Romanian rural culture and civilization. Gusti was also a member of the Romanian Academy and of various institutes of sociology (in Geneva, Tokyo and Prague), and *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Leipzig. During the interwar period, Gusti was revered as the founder of modern sociology in Romania. Although marginalized after the establishment of the communist

regime in 1947, Gusti's theories were appropriated by historical sociologists and historians of culture. Some of his writings were also used by western theorists of economic development in Latin America, and by those working within the paradigm of 'peripheral societies.' After 1989, many of Gusti's writings were re-edited in Romania, and his theory of the nation was adopted more by intellectuals searching for alternative models of national identity than those centered exclusively on ethnicity.

Main works: *Die Grundbegriffe des Presserecht* [Basic notions of the press law] (1908); *Soziologie, Politik und Ethik* [Sociology, politics and ethics] (1909); *Sociologia războiului* [The sociology of war] (1915); *Partidul politic* [The political party] (1924); *Sociologia militans*, 2 vols. [Militant sociology] (1935–1946); *Enciclopedia României*, 4 vols. [The encyclopedia of Romania] (1938–1943).

Context

After the creation of Greater Romania in 1918, Romanian intellectuals realized that the new political context required a corresponding cultural project. Romania was a predominantly rural country with a strong traditional community whose identity was rather parochial. Transforming these communities into a modern nation was a pressing issue for the interwar generation. In addition, with the annexation of Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia, Romania acquired a significant number of ethnic minorities (almost 30% of the total population in 1921) that not only changed the Romanians' self-perception as a majority, but also challenged their social and economic status. In Transylvania in particular, Hungarian and German minorities were largely urbanized, and occupied, at least until 1920, a central position in public administration and the economic sector. The nationalization of towns and cultural institutions was closely connected to the implementation of various cultural projects that aimed at offering a common national platform to all Romanians. Sociology, according to Gusti, was to take up the challenge offered by this historical opportunity. From a science of society, it had to become the science of the nation.

Gusti offered one of the most modern definitions of the nation produced in interwar Romania. Familiar with classical theories of the nation elaborated in the nineteenth century (especially those of Fichte, Renan and Mazzini), Gusti offered a synthesis, merging sociological theories with his local knowledge of Romanian society. According to Gusti, the nation should not be identified solely with the state, the people or race. He argued that neither language nor religion were prime conditions for defining national character. The nation was, Gusti believed, a social unit, defined by the relationship between citizens and the state. Agreeing that the nation was the most sophisticated form

of social solidarity, Gusti therefore insisted that the nation was the supreme human condition; individual destiny could only be accomplished within its national form.

The best approach to studying national realities, Gusti argued, was the 'monographic' one. Furthermore, sociology had to rely on first-hand research, and Gusti outlined a new definition of monographic research. The first condition was direct observation. The sociologist must be involved directly in social realities. Thus, fieldwork was strongly recommended. Secondly, the sociologist must be guided by intuition and empathy toward the social life under observation. The sociology of the nation should therefore not start from general observations, but from the knowledge of local and regional conditions. According to Gusti, Romanians were not yet a fully-fledged nation. After the completion of their political unification, the task was to elevate the 'Romanian people' to a superior stage, that of the 'Romanian nation.' Education and culture were the two conditions for realizing such a transformation. The real meaning of culture, according to Gusti, was to transform the community, defined both biologically and socially, into a nation, a superior spiritual social entity. Considering sociology as the "science of the nation," Gusti assigned a localized and particular meaning to this discipline. Sociology should become a discipline facilitating the understanding of Romanian social realities. Although Gusti advocated the transformation of sociology into a 'national science,' he did not promote its complete absorption by mechanisms of nation building, such as forced nationalization or ethnic segregation.

Gusti's methodological approach to the problem of the nation had some practical effects as well. A vast network of specialists working under his supervision covered the entire country. In the 1930s, this network was also used by the king Carol II, who financed the 'Sociological School,' to counteract the 'Legionary Movement's' growing influence both among the youth and in the rural areas. Gusti's research teams transgressed also ethnic affiliation, as many young Hungarian and German students from Transylvania participated in the research activities organized by the 'Sociological School.' Although some of this research was ground-breaking, Gusti's ambitious sociological project did not achieve its goals as effectively as imagined by its founder. In the increasingly politicized atmosphere of the 1940s, the ethnic model of the nation became the norm among intellectuals and political elites in Romania; the communist regime manifested a similar disregard for Gusti's model of social integration, seen as too 'liberal' and marred by a 'spiritualist' definition of the national community. As with other writings of the interwar period,

it was only after 1989 that his text on the nation was properly discussed by sociologists and anthropologists.

MT

The science of nation

The nation is the central reality which sums up all natural aspirations of individuals and in which all international manifestations begin, not toward a new being, but toward a new system of relations. The nation is the only social unit that is self-sufficient, in the sense that it does not require, for its complete accomplishment, a more inclusive social unit, being able to develop for itself its own values, establish a goal and identify the means of accomplishment, that is the organizing and fulfilling force of its own making. No other social unit occupies such an important place in the field of social life. For instance, family life does not represent, as it did in the Greek-Roman past, a closed, almost autonomous world, but is regulated largely by the State and is related through its economic and spiritual needs to a wider social life. Children do not only learn the power of the father, like in patriarchal families, but they are also protected by the State, and the State educates them and provides for their religious needs through special institutions, namely the school and the church. Therefore, families are not self-sufficient; they are subordinated to national life and the organization of the State. The same happens with almost all social units: villages, towns, churches, schools, etc. Therefore, science sometimes calls them, not without reason, social sub-units, and not social units. The nation, however, deserves more completely the name of a social unit, because it does not depend on a larger unit. It is true that until recently, the nation was also subordinated to the State, but with the world war this situation was changed to its advantage. National states do not show us any longer nations gathered arbitrarily, and ruled by force within a state, but they are a simple political expression of organization of the nation. Nowadays, the state is merely a form of manifestation of the nation, therefore a reality functionally subordinated to it. This is how, looking at its inner composition, the nation appears as the most significant and the most comprehensive social unit of our times. Outside, each nation is connected to other nations by common interests, which lead to collaboration or competition, and thus give us the aspect of international life. Internationalism does not mean pan-nationalism or cosmopolitanism, but connection among nations. In other words, true internationalism does not annihilate nations, but it looks at them in terms of their relations. In this way we get the true concept

of mankind. For nations together, in their joint efforts on the way to civilization, give rise to mankind, not in the anti-nationalist sense, of humanitarians without a country, but in the nationalist sense, as reality that reflects the being of nations and their creative energy. Beyond nations humankind does not occur as a world in itself, but humankind as the totality of nations, like harmony of the original and specific national beings. [...]

What is a nation? [...] First, we argue that the nation is a synthetic reality, in the sense that it forms a totality, a living and indivisible unit, impossible to reduce to individuals that compose it or to a single part of its being. The nation precedes us, its members, and at the same time is superior to us. Its wholeness comes from the fact that the nation is the most complete social unit, and what characterizes social units is their structure, by which the elements are organized in a particular way, not after their own nature, but after the nature of the whole. Individuals can participate in several social units without changing their nature. This means that the change takes place in the individual, depending on his participation in one or another social unit, and on the organizational principal of these units, which is irreducible to the composing individuals.

Second, we think that the nation is a voluntary creation, because unlike in a people, which is a natural ethnic community, the nation is created through a permanent effort, through the will of being, living and fighting. The nation requires a will that is aware of the goals that it pursues, mastering its means of action, capable of vast creations and oriented toward wide perspectives. It is not what nature made it, but what it strives to be, what results from the ceaseless effort of those that make it up. A nation lacking in will falls back into the natural state of a people, becoming a simple community of blood and tradition, not a community of will, conscience and aspirations. Peoples live a passive life of fatalism and resignation. The nations live an active life of fighting for an ideal and of creating its own destiny. Therefore, the element that distinguishes these two stages of development and shows us the transformation of a people into a nation is will. In other words, will appear to us as the essence of national life, as the most significant element, without which it could not be preserved.

Out of the will of the nation to succeed in manifesting itself begin all cultural creations and all connections with the environment and the factors that condition it. For a nation is not an uprooted reality, suspended in air, but on the contrary it has deep connections with the land on which it develops, with the blood of the population that makes it up, with the past and the products of its ancestors, and the psychological life of the living individuals.

A nation generally develops on a certain land, the land of the country. [...] The Romanians are a Carpathian people, and the Carpathians represent a Romanian world. Without this bond, which is now essential and organic, between the land and our people, we can understand nothing of the history and present civilization of the Romanian nation. It is true that there was a breach in this natural growth through capitalist influence, but after all the signs, the new Romanian world that is emerging will determinedly resume the interrupted line in terms of State life, and will return to the old unity between the Romanian land and civilization. In any case, a science of the nation is impossible without the detailed research of the relations between the nation and the land that houses it.

On the other hand, the nation cannot be separated from its ethnic background, from the population that composes it, its specific racial features, the hereditary substance, as well as physical and psychological features that only its members possess. The fact that there are no pure races, that no nation is made up of elements of the same race, does not mean that race does not play any role in the life of nations. It is sufficient for two nations to have different racial composition, that is to include populations of mixed races in different percentages, and therefore to impose in the hereditary process a different percentage of the same type of features, so that they should manifest specific features at least in certain respects. From this point of view, one can talk about a specific racial composition for each people, although race should not be mistaken for nation. To the same extent, the echo that the unity of the race has in the conscience of a nation must not be ignored. This time there is a collective psychological phenomenon, which is not strictly linked to the biological truth. Even if it does not represent a pure race, a people can have the conscience of a racial unit, and even of its superiority toward other peoples. [...]

A nation is also the sum of previous efforts, a result of a historical process, of life experience gained by the forefathers, accumulated and transmitted from generation to generation. Nations cannot be reduced to collectives of people that make them up at a certain moment. The dead come together with the living, and sometimes the orders of the past are perfectly valid for the present period, too. The historical past is not an outside factor that worsens in a way or other the life of nations, but an important part, the nation itself in progress, on the way to self-accomplishment, as destiny and mission. [...]

The creative manifestations of a nation can be reduced to some fundamental categories. Such are the economic, spiritual, judicial and political manifestations. In all domains, a nation tends to accomplish itself as truthfully as

possible, to express its working and creative power, to reach its own formula of culture, and therefore of specific settlement and manifestation inside universal civilization. Nations tend to gain their own economic life, to provide them with a lot of power and as much independence from other nations as possible. Nowadays, national sovereignty is increasingly not a strictly political issue, but a global manifestation in all fields. A country that is economically subjugated, franchised to foreign enterprises, a debtor of other countries, is not entirely the master of its own fate, even if politically speaking is has an apparently independent government, constitution and political organization. In addition, economic activity is what links a nation even more to its land. All the resources of life that the geographical environment provides, from the pastures that are appropriate for grazing, or the fields for cultivation, to the most hidden mineral resources, belong to the nation and are to be used gradually depending on the natural development of the nation, and to the extent in which there appear other resources for the following generations. An economic life that is given away to foreigners leads to the merciless exploitation of the riches that the country has and to the destruction of the means of living for the next generations or at least to the appearance of some activities that are alien to the nature and the stage of organic development of the nation, which further leads to the lack of inner equilibrium and to the dismembering of the national community. Consequently, economic manifestations are not chance elements in the life of a nation, but essential components through which the nation can be preserved and developed, but they can also lead to political degradation and even disappearance. [...]

To sum up, in a harmonious and indivisible synthesis, the economic, juridical and political manifestations of a nation form the genuine national culture, the highest form of human life. [...] A nation is not simply reduced to either its willpower, or its ideals in life, or to any of the cosmic or biological, historical or psychological factors, or to any of its economic, spiritual, juridical or political manifestations, but it includes all of them in an indissoluble whole, like a single being in life relations with the surrounding world. The science of nation must start from this reality and must present it to us unaltered in all its complexity and manifestations.

Translated by Mária Kovács

JÓZEF SZUJSKI: SOME TRUTHS FROM OUR HISTORY

Title: *Kilka prawd z dziejów naszych. Ku rozważeniu w chwili obecnej* (Some truths from our history. For consideration at the present moment)

Originally published: in 1867 as a separate booklet printed by *Przegląd Polski*

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from Józef Szujski, *O fałszywej historii jako mistrzyni fałszywej polityki. Rozprawy i artykuły*, ed. by Henryk Michalak, (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1991), pp. 189–208.

About the author

Józef Szujski [1835, Tarnów (present-day south Poland) – 1883, Cracow]: one of the most highly regarded Polish historians and conservative politicians. Szujski studied in Cracow and Vienna. Considered politically subversive, he was denied the position of history instructor at the Warsaw ‘High School’ (*Szkoła Główna*). Thus, he concentrated on his political writings. His *Portrety przez Nie-Van-Dycka* (Portraits by Not-Van-Dyck), published in 1861 and encompassing the program for the social progress and modernization of Poland, were enthusiastically received by the public in Galicia. In the years of the liberalization of the Austrian political system, Szujski’s outlook gradually shifted from that of a democrat to that of a conservative. During the January uprising (1863–64), he cooperated with the national government, publishing patriotic leaflets and a newspaper in Galicia entitled *Naprzód* (Forward). After the suppression of the insurrection, Szujski participated in a new conservative group around the *Przegląd Polski* (Polish review) in Cracow. The group, known as the *Stańczycy*, was anti-Russian, Catholic, conservative and pro-Western. Szujski is considered to be one of the founders of the Cracow conservative circle. While he advocated loyalty to the Austrian ruler, he also supported the limited democratic idea of an ‘open’ gentry, the “aristocracy of morality and the brain” (in which intellectual merits and civic virtues, rather than inherited privileges, would be decisive for the social status of the individual). From 1869 onwards, Szujski lectured on the history of Poland at the Jagiellonian University. He was also a deputy in the Galician legislature and the Austrian Parliament. Szujski considered himself a historian, not a politician, and thus public education was one of his first aims. In order to make an intellectual impact on Polish society, Szujski wrote several monumental (now totally forgotten) plays presenting his philosophy of history. He occupies an important place in the history of Polish historiography, and remains, together with the other *Stańczycy* members (Walerian Kalinka and **Michał Bobrzyński**), a point of reference for conservative modernizers.

Main works: *Portrety przez Nie-Van-Dycka* [Portraits by Not-Van-Dyck] (1861); *Dzieje Polski* [History of Poland] (1862–1866); *Kilka prawd z dziejów naszych. Ku rozważeniu w chwili obecnej* [Some truths from our history. For consideration at the present moment] (1867); *Zborowscy* (1868); *Maryna Mnischówna* (1875); *Śmierć Władysława IV* [Death of Władysław IV] (1876).

Context

Szujski's text is a result of bitter discussions that followed the suppression of the Polish uprising of 1863–64. As with many other participants in the unsuccessful struggle for independence, Szujski radically re-evaluated his attitude towards Polish history and Polish politics. It should be mentioned that Szujski's ideas do not represent the first attempt to re-interpret the national program in Galicia. Szujski simply followed his elder colleague, Antoni Zygmunt Helcel, whose political ideas turned from Romantic activism into political realism during the days of the *Galician Jacquerie* (a peasant revolt directed against Polish gentry) of 1846. Starting in the early 1860s, the Polish politicians of Galicia experienced a more liberal political regime. Many of them lost their faith in a revolutionary pursuit of Polish independence and concentrated on the social, economic and cultural development of Polish society in Galicia. Szujski's text is one of the first and most popular documents of the Polish political elite's reorientation in Galicia.

'Some Truths from our History' raises the question of responsibility for the defeat of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth in the eighteenth century. Szujski suggests that Poles themselves are to be blamed. The oppression of the peasantry, the refusal of law and order, and the lack of strong rulers made the partitions possible, and Prussia, Russia and Austria only made use of the opportunity. The fall of Poland was caused by the degeneration of the 'national spirit.' The *liberum veto* of the old gentry (a right of an individual to block the decisions of the majority) turned into *liberum conspiro* (a tendency to solve the national problems through military irredentism and conspiracies). After the suppression of the last uprising, the time of conspiracies was over. According to Szujski, the only possible and creative political program was that of the organic development of the nation (see **Aleksander Świętochowski**, *Political directives*). Szujski encouraged the Poles in Galicia to take the chance to be more active in political, social and economic terms, and thus, not to miss this unique opportunity. The second part of Szujski's text focuses upon the danger of pan-Slavist movements. The only credible supporter of the Polish national movement's anti-Russian policy, according to

Szujski, was Austria, and the Polish citizens of Austria-Hungary had to remain loyal to the Habsburgs. Apart from political calculations, it was also Szujski's conviction of the unquestionable Latin (and Catholic) character of Polish culture that made him a pro-Austrian.

Szujski's political program became the leading ideological text for Polish conservatives and right-wing liberals not only in Galicia, but also in Prussia/Germany and Russia. It is interesting how the notion of progress changed its meaning during the debates generated by Szujski's ideas. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, conservatism was perceived as a progressive ideology (contrary to archaic remainders of Polish Romanticism). At the turn of the twentieth century the emerging modern political movements reinterpreted Polish political goals and questioned the conservative right's entitlement to represent Polish opinion, something which the conservatives had taken for granted since the 1860s. Two political movements formed in the second half of the nineteenth century, instigated by the Polish nationalists and the socialists respectively, both of which tapped into the heritage of Romanticism. In the literary world, 'Young Poland,' a *fin-de-siècle* literary group of poets and writers, questioned the moral and artistic value of positivist literature (see **Artur Górski**, *Young Poland*).

Though it is hard to claim that all of Szujski's political writings enjoyed popularity, this text was surely a major source in the construction of a Polish self-image whereby the underdevelopment of Poland is linked to mechanisms of state building and organization. Thus, Szujski, together with his younger colleague, the brilliant historian **Michał Bobrzyński**, had to face the strong criticism of nationalist historians from the Russian part of Poland. Members of the so-called Warsaw historical school perceived themselves as being in constant struggle against Russification and for defending their national existence, which led them to more 'optimistic' conclusions concerning Polish history. In their view, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the eighteenth century had been subjected to external aggression precisely in the moment when it launched a process of political modernization, thus proving its ability to regenerate the state structures.

On the other hand, Szujski's interpretation of Polish history influenced not only the conservative circles of nineteenth-century Galicia. Even Polish communist historiography borrowed some ideas from his writings (for instance the idea of the collapse of the *Rzeczpospolita* because of an inefficient and abnormal internal political system). Szujski himself, however, as a conservative, was officially condemned in the works of the 1950s. This critical attitude gradually grew milder as Szujski and the Cracow school were forgot-

ten. Post-1989 attempts to revive the conflict between the conservative historical Cracow school and the liberal-nationalist Warsaw school were unsuccessful.

MG

**Some truths from our history.
For consideration at the present moment**

Why on earth did this nation die, a nation whose days were so glorious, lands so vast, ideas so lofty, spirit so noble, mission so important? [...]

Was it because of the particular form of its government? But have we not flourished during the monarchic reign of Bolesławs¹ and the liberal reign of the Jagiellons? Was it because of the supremacy of one social group or another? That also was not the reason, since the preponderance of the clergy and the magnates [...] saved Poland during the first Jagiellons from [...] separatism, and the preponderance of democratic gentry saw through the union of Poland and Lithuania during the reign of Zygmunt August², and also because we remember the rule of Stefan Batory³, who managed to make of all social strata the foundation of the last ten years' period of Poland's harmonious existence. For the ensuing three centuries we suffered a variety of monarchic and republican models, none of which could save Poland from her undoing or bring its renaissance after the partitioning. Why was that? Because the year 1586, when Stefan Batory died [...], marks the beginning of the decline of national and social harmony which requires both government as well as social peace and justice, the two elements that decide every nation's prosperity or decline.

Whatever the form of government, whatever the structure of society, those two elements must coexist for a nation to flourish. If they do, any form of government is effective and any social system adequate. If they don't, it means that there is some weakness or flaw in the social system or in the government, and that there is a sin against God's law in both. That is when a long, horrible era of internal unrest and catastrophe begins and thus justice is done by the hand of fate. A soul who believes in God may tremble at the results, but will never lose faith in its just purpose.

¹ Members of the first Polish dynasty, the Piasts.

² Sigismund II August (1520–1570): king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania, the last ruling Jagiellon.

³ Stefan Batory (István Báthory, 1533–1586): prince of Transylvania and elected king of Poland.

Now, the sin of this nation, as prophesized by our holy preacher,⁴ was its disregard for government, its disorder, its disregard for fellow men and the suffering of the common people. Its sin was to abandon the religion of its fathers, to turn away from God and The Holy Church. Those sins gave rise to the mad discord that resulted in the partitioning of Poland. It legitimated the kings' attempts to save the government by monarchic means, initiated by Batory, during whose reign there was still some harmony left in the nation, and later continued, with miserable results, by all of his successors. It entitled the Church to resort to such extreme measures as the introduction of Jesuitism. The common people were still dormant, hence inactive, while the gentry, the nation proper, submitted to the obfuscation of Jesuit radicalism without submitting to monarchic radicalism, and invented a violent and insane measure against it: *liberum veto*! It served to resist any change, any kind of social or political reform that conscience and circumstance required. [...]

Then came the time of bondage. Bondage is more than just external pressure, more than a social system that a nation finds oppressive, it is not merely one nation gaining the upper hand over another in a conflict, it is much more serious because it means that a nation is denied its government and its own power of control over society. Oh, madness of those who believe that it is enough to be willing to chase the enemy away, that it suffices to engage in petty conspiracy to be free and independent—be gone from our land, do not ever come back, because you bring nothing but an endless string of defeats, because your days are numbered, days that God's will allowed you to spend among us, because you have done enough harm, and now it is time for us to bury you with words of love and Christian forgiveness on our lips! Do you know what it means to be free? It means to be able to form a government and to reorganize the society. But the government cannot be some parody of itself—it has to be an organic government, one whose rule is all encompassing, and the reorganization of the society cannot be destructive, it has to be constructive.

Bondage came, but the social conditions remained the same. God, oh God! If we stop to think for but a while, can we see how horrible our fate had to be?

Initially, it was enough to have the members of the 'Great Diet,' who understood what government was and what social needs were. *Targowica*⁵ fell

⁴ Piotr Skarga (Piotr Powęski, 1536–1612): Jesuit at the court of king Sigismund III (1566–1632); called for a centralized monarchy and fought against religious tolerance, prophesying the decline of the kingdom.

⁵ Targowica: a republican confederation, announced in 1792 upon the aggression of Russia against the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Led by a group of Polish aristocrats, it combined traditional gentry conservatism with pro-Russian sentiment.

into disarray; it died a cynical and desperate death. The ideological limitations of the 'Great Diet' together with Kościuszko's saintliness provided the indispensable cementing of society.

That society used its political instinct to send its sons to join Italian legions and Napoleon's victorious troops. Not a single drop of blood shed for those causes went to waste, because it meant that the nation rescued its position in Europe by political means. That society helped to form the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which combined the ideas of the 'Great Diet' with Western European progress. But the 'Great Diet' generation has moved on in years, as everything does in this world. It underwent political transformation towards a fundamental contempt for the French imperialism combined with a fundamental lack of civil courage, as well as military transformation from patriotism towards the sense of pride as that saved by Prince Joseph⁶ in the waters of the Elster River. Those characteristics altered its sympathies from Napoleon to Alexander. However, only those who are incapable of celebrating a generation that leaves the scene of battle, a generation that was leaving the field, with minor exceptions, with dignity can condemn it; it can only be condemned by someone who had never stopped to think what it was that made someone like Kościuszko or Staszic⁷ drift towards Alexander.

Whoever considered those matters should have no difficulty in understanding the history of the Congress Kingdom of Poland and Kościuszko's insurrection. This is the battle of two generations [...]. The one that leaves the battlefield consists of the friends of Alexander, those who respect Poland in politics and are classicists in literature; those of the young generation are conspirators in politics and Romantics in literature. Let no one think, for fear of blasphemy, that either of those two sides had a monopoly on the spirit of the nation. Both had their arguments, while the truth was in the middle, but it was an elusive truth. On the one side there was the religious belief in government, on the other—the belief in social reform. Those two concepts were further apart than ever at the time of division, because it was bondage that stood between them. In the struggle against that bondage, some wanted to save the government as long as it bore traces of being Polish; others related the struggle for independence to social issues. It is the infamous vicious circle that ran its course in 1863. [...] During the November uprising the conspiracy was at its liveliest and

⁶ Prince Józef Antoni Poniatowski (1763–1813): nephew of the last king of Poland, Stanisław August Poniatowski, general of the Polish army and French marshal. Poniatowski died 1813 during the battle of nations in Leipzig where his Polish units fought in the rearguard of Napoleon's withdrawing army.

⁷ **Stanisław Staszic** (1755–1826): priest and political thinker.

most vigorous, it had the power of political arguments, the support of such geniuses as Mochnecki⁸ and Mickiewicz, it had minds that understood the need for government, it had the heroes of October 29, while their opponents, who called that day an unfortunate accident, who failed to implement the enfranchisement or to start a new era in politics or in literature, who, having seized power, failed to make use of the means created by the young—that fraction seemed to have no means of its own! The uprising of 1831 failed, the Congress Kingdom of Poland and other annexed territories came under the oppressive rule of tsar Nikolai, the battle of principles moved to emigration, which monopolized the leadership of the nation from 1831 to 1848.

If the consequences of bondage are horrible, the consequences of emigration are even worse. In bondage one does not lose track of reality, the sole basis of any political action, while in exile there remains only an idea, a feeling, a memory. Moreover, one has to cope with a foreign social system. It is even worse when one goes into exile with a broken heart, with horrible disillusionment, with anger and desperation. The two fractions of the emigrants developed further in those circumstances, one that supported the idea of government and the other that supported social reform. Such was the basis for all political sects in exile, right down to the creed of Andrzej Towiański,⁹ which, by appealing to quietism, attracted all the strongest spirits of emigration. Without foundation in reality, emigration parties spread their ideas with a strong belief in their efficacy, and the democratic fraction served the country well by disseminating liberal ideologies, in whose saving grace and essentiality they were firm believers. Who of us has not subscribed to their ideas, who could deny them credit for social action? Unfortunately, the democratic fraction had no political impact; its core ideas were only valid until 1831, when there was the right climate for action, when there was reality. To use a social movement for political means, to assume that despite having been free yesterday it would sacrifice itself today for the cause, to substitute a social organism with conspiracy, to initiate the movement with but a few people united around the sacred cause, to deny the existence of any social group that is present in society but failed to join in, to count on the weakness of the national spirit, volatile and driven by feelings, this is the naked truth of the theory of conspiracy; this is not something of Polish invention, but was bor-

⁸ **Maurycy Mochnecki** (1803–1834): literary critic and radical political leader during the November uprising (1830–1831).

⁹ **Andrzej Tomasz Towiański** (1799–1878): thinker and philosopher, initiator of a messianic emigrant circle that attracted most prominent Poles in exile (including **Adam Mickiewicz** and **Juliusz Słowacki** among others).

rowed from foreign social movements, a theory we all know, sent to us by Providence in order to introduce social equality, which died at the moment that equality was implemented. We cannot deny its double merit of martyrdom and the dissemination of progressive ideas, we cannot deny that what it has introduced in Poland was necessary—we are all its spiritual sons and there is no one in Poland who would fail to admit its victory, but the time has come to bury *liberi conspiro*, that spirit who had redeemed the old sinner, the *liberum veto*, with the blood and tears of millions.

I do not need to support my theses with a plethora of examples. It is enough to mention the events of 1833.¹⁰ 1846, 1848, and finally those of the last movement of 1863. All of them happened for the same cause, used the same means and repeated the same mistake. All that we are saying, and we say it with the utmost conviction, is that the gravity of a mistake grows proportionately to experience, and likewise increases the validity of the other side's arguments! Today, following the enfranchisement, it so happens that the conspirators are completely wrong while the proponents of regular, organic work are absolutely right!

Why is that? It is because 1863 closed the era of conspiracy for good, leaving not a single socially dependent person in Poland, the year 1863 saw the enfranchisement of the folk, which, as a lesser evil, had been the subject of conspiratorial efforts. Because to continue the conspiracy after 1863 would no longer be a struggle for independence, which no country in the world regained by conspiratorial means, it would no longer be the continuation of social revolution, which had already happened in 1863, but it would mean condemning the country to peril, assisting Moscow in its destruction of Poland. Just like *liberum veto* after the Constitution of May 3 was *Targowica*, so would be *liberum conspiro* after the enfranchisement, but with more horrible consequences. This is not freedom, this is socialism; this is not independence—this is to be devoured by Moscow!

Let us then repeat that today the right way is the way of normal, organic development of the nation, of social order following the enfranchisement and equality. In the political, social and economic spheres we should openly and publicly start using new forces, from among us we should elect a group of public figures enjoying the confidence of the nation. The Parliament, the public institutions and associations—these are our legal bodies. No other bodies should function or be established. [...]

¹⁰ The expedition of Józef Zaliwski organized through exile groups in 1833 ended in complete failure after reaching Poland; many of its participants were arrested.

As an essentially Slavic country and as the queen of Slavic nations on their Western frontier, Poland had two enemies: the Germans from its beginnings to the early Jagiellons and Moscow from the Jagiellon era until today. [...] Five centuries ago the Germans were our enemies, today it is only Moscow.

Moscow, I repeat, because only Moscow has an unaccomplished mission and Austria is in its way. Prussia can side with Russia, but once having united to form one German state, it has had no interest in killing us, because every Western state realizes that killing another nation only exhausts and wastes its own strength. Whoever stands in opposition to Polish interests in Austria, in opposition to the direction of organic work, willy-nilly sides with Moscow. [...]

We are in a monarchy whose position with respect to Russia is the same as that of Poland a century ago. Despite considerable, decided differences between Austria and the Republic of Poland of old, there is a striking similarity in that area. Anyone with a reasonable outlook cannot deny that Austria today, like Poland once, is in a sorry state of disorder due to the overlooking of the essential mission: the Eastern mission. The issue of Turkey allowed Russia to grow at the expense of Poland, the issue of Poland enabled it to reach the border of Austria and become a dangerous neighbor. The Turkish issue served to divert the attention of Poland; Germany and Italy have attracted the attention of Austria and brought it some serious, irreparable losses. The Austrian monarchy is troubled by the same internal problems that once plagued Poland. A century ago Poland had to find within itself the conditions for becoming a truly European, modern state or perish; today Austria has to find her *raison d'être* in the modern era of nation-states or prepare for a period of hardships. Centralization proved to be both ineffective and harmful; it came up against the solid resistance of historical laws and national consciousness. It was like the internal divisions that were the downfall of Poland, its intolerance and the narrow-mindedness of its internal and external politics.

The old methods have exhausted themselves—there is no coming back to the era of Metternich's absolutism. Dualism, trialism, the Slavic, German or Hungarian supremacy are nothing but conflicting forces, which will never find their balance until the magical word 'Become!' is spoken. [...]

After all said, we can add: *Adviene que pourra* if we only follow the principles of enlightened politics at home.

Enlightened politics means dealing with internal issues in a liberal manner, in accord with national politics. It is here that we are dealing with a long-standing denial, which makes Augean stables of things. [...]

The Ukrainian¹¹ question is for Poland a question of federation, for Moscow it is a question of Pan-Slavic absolutism. By putting forward the issue of federation we are dealing with the issue of Ukrainians in Galicia. We are calling the Ukrainians the Ukrainians and the Ukrainian language Ukrainian, we provide it with conditions to develop, but we demand what is right and we take into account the current state of affairs. We recognize the Ukraine in Parliament, at school, at the municipal level, but we demand that it recognize the union and us, that it stop being a conspiracy of Moscow and socialists, that it admit to having sinned and to having betrayed the principles of its forbears! Everything for the Ukrainians, but not for Moscow, everything for the Ukrainians, but no compromise with those who have proved completely unable to compromise!

Translated by Zuzanna Ładyga

¹¹ "Ruski" in the original.

TITU MAIORESCU: AGAINST THE CONTEMPORARY DIRECTION IN ROMANIAN CULTURE

Title: *În contra direcției de astăzi în cultura română* (Against the contemporary direction in Romanian culture)

Originally published: *Convorbiri literare* II, no. 19 (1 December 1868), pp. 301–307.

Language: Romanian

The excerpts used are from Titu Maiorescu, *Opere*, vol. I (Bucharest: Minerva, 1978), pp. 147–149, 150–154.

About the author

Titu Maiorescu [1840, Craiova – 1917, Bucharest]: literary critic and politician. His father was a well-known writer and Transylvanian Romanian political activist. In 1851, Maiorescu enrolled in the famous Theresianum Academy in Vienna. In 1854, he began publishing short poems and stories. In 1858, after graduating from the Theresianum, he continued his studies in Berlin and Gießen, where he submitted his doctoral dissertation. In 1861, Maiorescu returned to Romania. In 1863, he was appointed director of the ‘National College’ and professor at the University of Iași. In 1864, the literary group *Junimea* (The youth) was founded and in 1867, one of the most important journals of nineteenth-century Romania, *Convorbiri literare* (Literary conversations) was established. Although *Junimea* was not a political organization, its members were involved in politics. Maiorescu would soon become the *spiritus rector* of *Junimea* and of the cultural and political current known as *Junimism*. In 1866, Maiorescu published ‘On the writing of Romanian language,’ in which he proposed the establishment of the phonetic principle in Romanian spelling. His linguistic proposals were adopted in 1880. In 1867, Maiorescu published his first study of literary criticism, ‘Romanian poetry,’ which signaled the formation of a new style of critical analysis of Romanian literature. In 1872, he published ‘The new direction in Romanian prose and poetry,’ in which the critique of ‘Latinism’ of Romanian authors, namely their excess of Latin terminology, was explicitly formulated. After 1870, Maiorescu became more active in politics. Already in 1866, he had turned towards the Conservative Party and its leaders, politicians and literary critics Petre P. Carp (1837–1919) and Vasile Pogor (1833–1906). In 1871, Maiorescu became a member of Parliament. From 1884 to 1909, he taught at the University of Bucharest. In 1913, Maiorescu was the president of the conference that ended the Second Balkan War and led to the Peace of Bucharest. During the First World War, being pro-German, he refused to abandon the capital and stayed in Bucharest during the Ger-

man occupation. In his position as party leader, minister, prime minister, and political journalist, Maiorescu succeeded in alerting his contemporaries to the malfunction of modern Romanian institutions. His critical observations of Romanian literature and culture have been constantly evoked in all major debates on Romanian national identity since the late nineteenth century. After his death, Maiorescu was recognized as one of the important literary critics of modern Romanian culture, a position which remained unchallenged both during communism and after 1989.

Main works: *Contra școalei Bărnuțiu* [Against the Bărnuțiu school] (1868); *Dirrecția nouă în poezia și proza română* [The new direction in Romanian prose and poetry] (1872); *Critice* [Critiques] (1874); *Literatura română și străinătatea* [Romanian literature and foreign countries] (1882); *Istoria contemporană a României* [The contemporary history of Romania] (1895); *Discursuri parlamentare*, 5 vols. [Parliamentary speeches] (1897–1915).

Context

The first organized criticism of the direction Romanian society had taken since late eighteenth century came from a group of young men in Iași who studied in Western universities, particularly in Austria and Germany. The group named itself *Junimea* and expressed their opinions in a journal they began publishing in 1867 under the name *Convorbiri literare*. The social and political philosophy of the group was very much indebted to conservative and evolutionist theories about social change and the gradual course of development (Edmund Burke, H. T. Buckle and Herbert Spencer). At the beginning of its activity, the society organized public lectures in which various foreign and domestic cultural and political ideas were discussed and criticized. The lectures were a great success and soon *Junimea* became the barometer of the intellectual life of Romania. The founding members of *Junimea*—with the exception of Titu Maiorescu—came from the aristocratic families of Moldavian society. Theodor Rosseti, for example, was the brother-in-law of Alexandru Cuza, the first prince of the united Danubian Principalities, while Petre Carp and Vasile Pogor were the scions of old boyar families. *Junimea* would soon attract other famous Romanian intellectuals. Among them, one should mention the historian Alexandru D. Xenopol, the philosopher Vasile Conta, the poet **Mihai Eminescu**, the novelist Ion Creangă and the playwright **Ion Luca Caragiale**.

‘Against the contemporary direction in Romanian culture’ became one of the crucial texts of modern Romanian cultural criticism. Maiorescu’s critique of political modernity was largely derived from his philosophy of culture, which fused a form of Hegelian aestheticism with the principles of *l’art pour l’art*. Romanian culture was totally vitiated by uncritical imitation and ap-

propriation, Maiorescu believed. He also directly accused the generation of 1848 of having completely and uncritically absorbed modern Western culture and for politicizing the aesthetic sphere. In Maiorescu's opinion, this generation ignored the local historical conditions and adopted political and cultural forms that had no foundations in Romanian society. He mercilessly demolished this *façade*: before having a political party and a public interested in learning, he argued, political journals and literary reviews were founded; before having teachers, schools were founded; and before having a cultural life, cultural societies were established. Maiorescu therefore maintained that Romanian politics and culture were nothing but "phantoms without bodies," "forms without substance." Furthermore, Maiorescu believed that there was a gap between the institutions and the social structure of contemporary Romania. He further argued that Romania still lacked a bourgeoisie, so it possessed only two social classes: proprietors and peasants. Maiorescu, like other *Junitists*, considered the 'Liberal Party' as an 'artificial' creation, representing a social category not existing in Romania, namely the middle-class. This approach was in contradiction with that of his liberal contemporaries who were convinced that it was enough to formally implement democratic institutions in order to obtain a functioning democratic and modern society. Maiorescu also pointed out that in advanced countries of Western Europe the category of state functionaries was composed of middle-class entrepreneurs who acquired political prominence only after proving their personal wealth and contributing to the general welfare of society. By comparison, Romanian bureaucracy resembled more a class of social parasites, whose material wealth was the result of, and not the precondition for, their political position. However, Maiorescu believed that Romania would eventually experience cultural and political modernization, and suggested that the country would evolve into a modern civilization, without having to eliminate its native traditions. Modernization, according to Maiorescu, had to be implemented in the field of institutions first, before transforming society at large; hence his criticism of the 1866 constitution, considered a 'form' alien to the body of society. The relationship between European forms of constitutionalism and a traditional Romanian society was illustrative, claimed Maiorescu, of the internal contradictions of Romanian modernity. Ultimately, what was needed was to carefully adjust the western principles and institutional models to the specific conditions of Romanian society.

Although some of the judgments Maiorescu bestowed upon contemporary Romanian culture were exaggerated, the effect of his critique was durable. He not only influenced many important Romanian intellectuals of the early

twentieth century and the interwar period, but also established a new pattern of conceptualizing culture and politics in Romania. During the right-wing regimes of the interwar period, Maiorescu was often used as a symbol by those resisting the political appropriation of cultural values and the subordination of the esthetic criteria for political propaganda. Yet, during the communist period, many of his ideas were manipulated by nationalists and autochthonists alike who adopted Maiorescu's critique of standardized modernity in order to launch their attack on Western influences on Romanian culture. In the last two decades, a proper critical evaluation of his work has finally been produced, paralleled by a broad dissemination of his ideas to the general public.

MT

Against the contemporary direction in Romanian culture

Sunk in Oriental barbarity until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Romanian society began, around 1820, to awaken from its lethargy, touched only then by the contagious movement by which the ideas of the French revolution crossed the entirety of Europe. Attracted by light, our youth started that extraordinary migration to the fountains of science in France and Germany, which to this day has been intensifying gradually, and which has given, especially to the free Romania, some of the gloss of foreign societies. Unfortunately, only the superficial gloss! For as unprepared as they were and are, our youths, stunned by the great phenomena of modern culture, were penetrated only by the effects, they did not reach the causes and saw only the superficial forms of civilization, but did not see the more profound historical fundaments which necessarily produced those forms, and without whose pre-existence they could not have existed. And thus, limited in a fatal superficiality, with their mind and heart touched by the same fire, the Romanian youth returned and still return to their country with the determination to imitate and reproduce the appearances of western culture, trusting that in the most rapid way they will accomplish the entire literature, science, fine arts and, above all, the liberty of a modern state. And these juvenile illusions have been repeated so often that by now they have achieved a genuine intellectual atmosphere in Romanian society, a powerful trend which has fascinated the young and the old equally, both those who have gone there to study, and those who have come back to apply what they have learnt. [...]

Only this can explain the vice that contaminated our public life, which is the lack of any sound fundament for the superficial forms that we keep re-

ceiving. What is dangerous in this respect is not so much the absence of the fundament itself, but the lack of any sense of need for this fundament in the public, the self-sufficiency with which our people believe and are believed to have done a deed when they produced or translated only an empty form of the foreigners. This total wandering of judgment is the most significant phenomenon in our intellectual situation, such a serious phenomenon that we think it is the duty of each honest intelligent person to study it, follow it from its first showing in Romanian culture and denouncing it everywhere to the young spirits so that they understand and accept the task of combating it and annihilating it without mercy, unless they themselves want to be crushed by its burden.

In 1812, Petru Maior—not to mention the compilation of quotations made uncritically by Șincai—wrote his history about the beginnings of the Romanians in Dacia. In his tendency to prove that we are the Romans' uncorrupted descendants, Maior writes in paragraph four that the Dacians were totally exterminated by the Romans, so that there was no mixture between the two peoples. To prove such an improbable hypothesis, our historian relies on a doubtful passage in Eutropius¹ and a passage in Julian,² to which he gives an interpretation that is impossible for anyone in their right mind to accept, and thus the historical demonstration of our Romanity begins with the falsification of history. [...]

We repeat: what is surprising and saddening about these products is not their erroneous nature, for this can be explained and sometimes justified by the circumstances of the time, but the error in our judgment of them today, the praise and satisfaction with which they are regarded by Romanian intelligentsia as valid scholarly achievements, the blindness that prevents us from seeing that the building of Romanian nationality cannot be based on a foundation at the center of which lies untruth. [...]

Once the false direction was taken up by the three works at the beginning of our modern culture, the Romanian intelligentsia moved ahead easily along the indicated path, and with the same untruth in the inside, and the same claim in the outside, all the forms of modern civilization were imitated and modified. Before having a political party, which could feel the need for an organism, and a public that cares for science, who needed readings, we established political journals and literary reviews, and falsified and disregarded

¹ Flavius Eutropius (c. fourth century): Roman historian and the court historian for the Roman Emperor Valens (364–378).

² Flavius Claudius Iulianus: Roman Emperor (r. 331–363).

journalism. Before we had any village teachers, we created village schools, and before we had any professors, we opened universities, and [thus] we falsified public instruction. Before we had a culture outside of the schools, we created the Romanian Athenaeum and cultural associations, and we despised the spirit of the literary societies. Before we had even a shade of original scientific activity, we created the Romanian Academic Society, with departments of philology, historical-archeology and natural sciences, and we falsified the idea of an Academy. Before we had any notable artists, we created the Music Conservatory; before we had a single worthy painter, we created fine art schools; before we had a single valuable play, we founded the National Theatre, and we devalued and falsified all these forms of culture.

Apparently, judging by the statistics of outside forms, the Romanians have now almost the entire western civilization. We have politics and science, journals and academies, schools and literature, museums, conservatories, theatres and we even have a constitution. But in reality all these are dead productions, pretensions without a fundament, ghosts without a body, illusions without a grain of truth, and thus the culture of the Romanian high classes is null and worthless, and the abyss that separates us from the people in the lower classes is becoming deeper and deeper every day. The only genuine class in our case is the Romanian peasant, in his reality is his suffering, which he endures the phantasmagoria of the higher classes. For his daily sweat produces the material means that support the fictitious edifice we call the Romanian culture, and with our last might we force him to pay for our painters and musicians, our academics and Athenians in Bucharest, the literary and scientific prizes all over the country, and out of gratefulness, we fail to produce at least one work that might please his heart and make him forget for a moment his everyday misery.

It is impossible to live like this any longer. The complaints of the low classes and the ridicule of the high classes have reached a climax. On the other hand, by facilitating communication, western culture comes to us now, because we did not know how to go to meet it. Under its victorious light all the artifice and caricature of our "civilization" will be manifest, all the empty forms that we have boasted with so far will take their revenge, attracting greedily the solid fund of the foreign heart.

Is there time for escape? Is it still possible for an energetic reaction to appear in the minds of the Romanian youth, who—despising the untruthfulness so far—would awaken the will to lay the true foundation where there are only illusory pretensions today? Maybe fate will give us time to regenerate the public spirit, and before we allow deadly indifference to creep into hearts,

it is still the duty of each amongst the intelligentsia who sees the danger to fight until the last moment against it. [...]

From here we should learn the great truth—mediocrity must be discouraged in the public life of a people, and the less cultivated the people is, the more so, because it is dangerous. What has genuine value can be seen at first sight and does not need indulgence, for it is not only good for us and for the time being, but for everyone and always.

The second truth, and the more significant one, which we have to understand is: form without substance not only fails to bring any benefits, but it is downright damaging, because it destroys a powerful means of culture. Therefore, we shall say: it is better not to start any school than start a bad school, it is better not to have painting galleries than have one which has no fine art; we'd better not have bylaws, organization, honorary members and plain members of an association than to have them without having had the associative spirit show in the persons that constitute it; we'd better not have an academy with its sections, solemn meetings, speeches with receptions, with academic journals for publications, than to have all these without the scientific maturity that is the only reason for its existence.

For if we do this, then we produce a line of forms that are forced to exist for a period of time without their own substance. But as long as an academy is forced to exist without the existence of science, and association without the associative spirit, a painting gallery without art and a school without good instruction, the forms are discredited in the eyes of the public opinion and postpone the formation of the essence, which—independent from the form—could come into being in the future, and which then would be ashamed to put on their despised garments. [...] For a people can live without culture, hoping that at the right time of its development this blessed form of human life will emerge; but a people cannot live with a fake culture, and if it persists in it, then it sets an example for the old law of history; in the fight between genuine civilization and a resisting nation, the nation is crushed, but the truth is never lost.

Translated by Mária Kovács

MICHAŁ BOBRZYŃSKI: HISTORY OF POLAND IN OUTLINE

Title: *Dzieje Polski w zarysie* (History of Poland in outline)

Originally published: Warsaw: Gebethner i Wolff ; Cracow: G. Gebethner, 1879

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from Michał Bobrzyński, *Dzieje Polski w zarysie*, ed. by Marian H. Serejski and Andrzej F. Grabski (Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1977), pp. 397–408.

About the author

Michał Bobrzyński [1849, Cracow – 1935, Poznań]: one of the most important Polish historians and an influential politician. At the age of 28, he became professor at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow. At the age of 29, he was elected a member of the Academy of Sciences. He was a deputy in the Viennese Parliament, and vice-president of the regional Galician ‘Ministry of Education’ (*Rada Szkolna Krajowa*). Between 1908 and 1913, he was the governor of Galicia. During the First World War, Bobrzyński was the minister for Galicia in the Austrian government. His ideological stance remained almost unchanged from the very beginning of his political career. Bobrzyński was the youngest in the Cracow conservative circle (Stanisław Koźmian, **Józef Szujski**, Stanisław Tarnowski). He advocated close co-operation with the Habsburgs and rejected the prospect of military attempt for achieving independence. He was not only the youngest but also proved to be the most open-minded of the *Stańczycy*. He did not share their deep social conservatism. Finally, as the governor of Galicia, he supported **Józef Piłsudski**’s attempts to create pro-Austrian Polish military units on the eve of the First World War. As a historian, Bobrzyński is mostly known for his seminal work on the history of Poland. It was published many times in various forms, and Bobrzyński updated his research for the period from 1773 to the 1920s. Probably the most influential among the works that constitute the intellectual heritage of the Galician conservatives, Bobrzyński’s study retains its significance even today.

Main works: *O ustawodawstwie nieszawskim Kazimierza Jagiellończyka* [On the law of Nieszawa by Kazimierz Jagiellończyk] (1875); *Dzieje Polski w zarysie* [History of Poland in outline] (1879); *W imię prawdy dziejowej* [In the name of historical truth] (1879); *Szkice i studia historyczne* [Historical sketches and studies] (1922).

Context

Bobrzyński was the youngest member of the Cracow school. Contrary to the older generation, he did not participate in the January uprising of 1863–64. Thus, he lacked the traumatic generational experience that fueled the programs of modernization formulated through the 1860s to the 1880s, developed without any prospect of national and political emancipation. Nevertheless, he shared the *Stańczycy*'s assumption about the fall of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Similar to Józef Szujski or Walerian Kalinka, he attributed the catastrophe to the internal anarchy of the *Rzeczpospolita*, disregarding the impact of Russian, Prussian and Austrian policies towards Poland. His vision of Polish history offered an answer to the question of how to avoid this fate. In his opinion, only a strong, absolute, and effective government would have been able to safeguard Polish independence. Thus, Bobrzyński highlighted the 'absolutist' medieval period in Polish history, while criticizing the Jagiellonian dynasty and—especially—the seventeenth century Polish gentry as a source of anarchy. While criticizing the lack of monarchic centralization, he questioned the popular historical myths that had been reified in the scholarship of **Joachim Lelewel**. Bobrzyński questioned the positive perceptions of the 'golden age' (that is the sixteenth century) and its vision of religious tolerance. This age, he believed, contained the very causes of subsequent internal chaos, and prompted the weakening of state structures. Contrary to Szujski's texts however, Bobrzyński did not use historical arguments to raise contemporary political questions. His own ideas are presented in a subtle manner, covered under unquestionably professional 'positivist' methodology.

The book immediately attracted public interest. Reactions were extreme: from fundamental criticism to total approval. It is worth mentioning that among the most severe critics of *Dzieje Polski w zarysie*, one can find other Cracow conservatives: **Józef Szujski** and Walerian Kalinka. Both criticized Bobrzyński for his alleged sympathy to Bismarck's political ideology and his underestimation of the role of the Catholic Church in Polish history. Other critics raised the question of 'historical pessimism.' The historian Władysław Konopczyński and the writer Stefan Żeromski, both representing the Polish intelligentsia from the Russian region, pointed out (coincidental) similarities between Bobrzyński's ideas and the official interpretation of history offered by the Russian ideologists of Russification. Bobrzyński's book does not, however, offer an exclusively pessimistic vision of the past. The author emphasized the political revival of the late years of independent Poland, espe-

cially of the days of the 'Great Diet.' The whole Polish debate around the ideas and interpretations of Bobrzyński found its parallel in the Czech controversy about the formulations of **Tomáš G. Masaryk** and **Josef Pekař**, and accordingly it united historical analyses with political actualities.

Paradoxically, a conservative interpretation of national history also influenced post-1945 Polish Marxist historiography. All features of Bobrzyński's vision of history, the sins of the gentry, the critique of Polish anarchy, the idea of strong government and—last, but definitely not least—the kind of oblivion regarding Russian politics towards Poland and Lithuania in the late eighteenth century, were appropriated by the communist historians. However, Bobrzyński himself, as a conservative and pro-Austrian politician, did not fit into the category of a progressive historical tradition. Although later he was recognized as one of the most important Polish historians, his interpretation of Polish history is not among the popular topics of contemporary debate.

MG

History of Poland in outline

To the best of our abilities and with the means available we have achieved our task: a picture of the Republic's historic progress, much different from that painted by our predecessors, now exists for the readers to see and to judge. It is with great pain and sorrow that one closes a book which presents in such dark colors the catastrophe of the last three centuries of our history.

It makes no mention of the outstanding qualities or achievements of our predecessors that the earlier sources fed us with; the great social and political innovations that we were supposedly the first to bring to life as an example for Europe to follow. Whoever looks at this history and sees the origins of the famous Polish liberty in anarchy and a lack of strong government and then proves as their inevitable consequence the decline of a nation, will evidently never argue that Poland was the first in Europe to realize the idea of pure liberty that is, liberty which goes hand in hand with law and order; he will never be capable of saying that Polish liberty, or rather insubordination, was a model for other nations and an encouragement for them to abolish absolutist rule. [...]

It is difficult to deal with those who, while seeing clearly our mistakes and sins, put all the blame for our misery and loss of political existence on foreign aggressors and our neighbors' dishonesty. It is of little consolation to present others in a worse light than oneself, to label the evil experienced as

lawlessness and abuse. And here again, history comes in useful in proving wrong the idea that our innocent country had fallen victim to foreign violence. [...] Our country, while being annexed by its neighbors, was no less than them in terms of size, population, prosperity or intelligence. Actually, we surpassed each if not in one then in another aspect. Still, we were the only ones to fall, and what is more, without a fight, an honest fight of which we were not incapable. Those who were annexing us were involved in such fierce conflicts that they were frequently eager to help us if only we allied with them and were willing to offer the smallest possible assistance in opposing their adversaries. Such was the extent of our decay and disintegration, and such was the seriousness of our mistakes and sins that blinded us that we rejected such proposals. Therefore, we should look no further than ourselves for causes of our misery. Only then, when we alleviate our domestic problems, will we have the chance to be respected and feel significant. [...]

We cannot turn back the clock and change the facts, but if we want to learn any lesson from them, we need to ask ourselves about the causes of the country's fall and to examine them with a clear, honest and unemotional eye. [...]

Whatever causes for our country's collapse we find today—be it oppression of the people by the gentry, regress of the cities, moral disintegration or intellectual eclipse—all these will never be more than secondary phenomena, which also occurred in other places, often in worse circumstances, but which nowhere caused a nation to cease to exist politically. For everywhere else there was a government that, upon recognizing the danger, was sooner or later ready to avert or minimize it. Our country was the only one to lack this vital element, a government which, when the time was near, would unify all, even the most deficient forces. The one and only reason of our fall was that we did not have a government. [...]

Our entire history from the sixteenth century onwards gives an impression of a chronicle of youthful upheavals and dangerous games rather than of mature labor and serious exercise—an impression which is not at odds with reality. We were the last to join the Western nations and their civilization, and our geographical distance to them was the longest so that we could experience their influence only indirectly. The Italians, the French, the Spanish and partly also the English developed on the rich foundations of the ancient world, whose lasting efforts provided them with a rich and inspiring heritage. The Germans had to learn the hard lesson of the Frankish country before they could start their independent existence. All of them began their history and work as much as five centuries before us and hence for the next five centuries

they had the time to mature and grow in strength, while we were making our first steps in the harsh reality of the times. We had five hundred years to achieve what others did in ten, and we frequently were hard on their heels in this noble contest. However, is it surprising that by the end of the fifteenth century we were slightly behind them, that we were still more like a young boy fraternizing with adult men and trying to do their backbreaking work? [...] Let us go back to the fifteenth century. Our nation then did not have enough strength to defend its stability in the face of the threatening German incursions, and so, it turned for rescue to the Ruthenian–Lithuanian Union. The Tannenberg fields¹ saw the defeat of the enemy army, but from then on, Poland had to take up the enormous task of colonizing and civilizing vast lands of Ruthenia and Lithuania. The task, although performed with great pride, drained the country's vitality resources, scattering them in the Far East instead of nursing and concentrating them within the country's borders, and breathing new life into them. Let us imagine, only for a moment, that these millions of Poles, our capital and our labor, whom we have given to the East had remained inside our ethnographic borders—what difference would it have made for our national development! A denser population would not have found sufficient means to sustain itself in agriculture, and it would have had to divert its activity to industry and trade, to create cities whose bourgeoisie would counterbalance the gentry. Harsher conditions of everyday life, and a more violent struggle for survival would have given rise to new desires and new energy, would have enriched the intellectual realm and inspired more action. And if the circumstances forced us to engage in fierce civil wars, we would have come out of them with a strong government and a clear vision of the future. However, the facts are that we could not survive without the Union,² and the Union has consumed our insides—this is the vicious circle of our national failure.

Here is how we try to solve the greatest historical mystery. We do not see it as the only, or the most educating one. We are not among those who, having pointed to mistakes and vices, think they have done all that was needed. [...] Let us learn from our tragic experience and never forget that, above all, we should follow the worthy and brilliant examples from our own history.

In search of models and programs, they have been brought to attention many a time, but how it has been done only until recently! The research into

¹ The battle of Tannenberg (Grunwald) in 1410.

² Bobrzyński means the union between Poland and Lithuania in Lublin 1569. One of its immediate effects was the attachment of large Ukrainian territories to the Polish crown and Polish colonization of the whole area.

the past was limited only to the history of the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, that is, the epoch of our greatest decline. The image of the nation was cleared of its vices, its virtues were highlighted, and a perfected model of a noble Pole was presented for us to love and follow. Needless to say, this was a Pole with his head shaven at the back, dressed in a robe, and carrying a curved sword; a Pole always gallantly mounting his horse, always eager to defend his homeland and crush enemy regiments with a pennon in hand; a Catholic registered in the scapular, devoted in his prayers, virtuous and calm in the matters of his home and, although fast to defend his honor with a broadsword, easily reconciling with his neighbor over a bottle of wine; a man proud of his noble ring and equality, raised in a monastic boarding school and polished in the royal court; a man of great eloquence both in court and in parliamentary session, fluent in Latin, eagerly participating in public life and always seeking consensus in arguments; a severe judge in a tribunal; a gentleman respectful of the crown; and a soldier in the name of freedom and religion. Strangely enough, it was never questioned whether this ideal Pole paid regular taxes! It was never noticed that he was a lifeless sculpture, devoid of real character and ambitions, narrow-minded in social and political matters. Finally, it was never acknowledged that a nation consisting of such ideal Poles could not exist because of its immobility. [...] The only thing, which can rescue us from the pits of falsity, is history. The history which, by directing our eyes to the epoch of our greatest splendor, would show us not the example of one, typical citizen, but rather a whole society abundant in characters that are fit, energetic, and broad-minded in terms of knowledge, feelings and actions.

In its moments of greatness, Polish society was not monopolized by the gentry. This status was only a means of consolidating this part of the nation, which directed its efforts and actions towards higher aims. Apart from that, however, there existed an independent bourgeois and landowners who also considered themselves to be rightful citizens of the country regardless of their origin and occupation, and who owed their positions to hard work, education, talent and wealth. Intelligence was greatly valued for membership in the clergy, which could turn even the plainest servant into a political magnate and provide him and his family with the most extraordinary riches. [...] Not until the epoch of its great fall did Poland know the poisonous kind of equality—the only thing it knew was social stability that connected people of different positions in common effort for the public good.

This stability was guarded by the government, which never suppressed differences of opinion, but raised an iron hand against any, even the most pow-

erful persons, who dared to break the law and who stubbornly obstructed the country's policies. Nor was this government afraid of unpopularity, and, always rising above the shortsightedness of the masses, acted constantly focused on its goals and resolute towards its means. [...]

This country had always found the greatest support and leverage for its efforts in modesty. And not until the death of Zygmunt August the king³ did it become fond of the vain boastfulness of putting itself before the most advanced nations. It knew perfectly how much it owed to these nations and was aware how many of its best institutions were taken from abroad. It felt strongly attracted to the Western civilization and constantly adopted its newest inventions, its social and political solutions, its education and knowledge, its church systems, its economy, trade, industry and art. Moreover, it was never hesitant to open its doors to foreigners who, bored with their own country, came to Poland in search of a better life. Our country provided the conditions and welcomed all who had the capital and efficient labor, to mention only the Jews, the German colonizers, the Italians and eventually the French. [...] We were not boastful about our past, and, as every man who did not yet reach the limits of his development, we had our eyes focused on the future; we lived in the future.

Not until the last years of the sixteenth century did it occur to anyone that our nation was chosen for a special mission and that this mission frees us from the obligation to abide by the general laws of human progress. Before that, Polish citizens bravely carried the burden of these laws and knew that every violation will bring horrendous consequences. They knew that Poland owed its position in Europe only to its endurance and hard work and were never afraid to join the battle for humanity's existence. Instead of becoming fossilized in itself, seeking protection in its scarecrow costume, our country used to embrace these religious, social and political trends that were shaking Europe, and would join other nations in tackling national issues as they arose. [...]

In the past, Poland was more open-minded. The ideas it nursed were brighter than those that sprouted from the ignorance and shortsightedness in the era of the country's fall, or from the rotten politics and false historiography of recent times.

Translated by Zuzanna Ładyga

³ Sigismund II August (1520–1572): king of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania and the last representative of the Jagiellon dynasty.

GARABET IBRĂILEANU: THE CRITICAL SPRIT IN ROMANIAN CULTURE

Title: *Spiritul critic în cultura românească* (The critical spirit in Romanian culture)

Original published: Iași, *Viața românească*, 1909

Language: Romanian

The excerpts used are from *Spiritul critic în cultura română* (Bucharest: Minerva, 1979), pp. 11–13, 182–186.

About the author

Garabet Ibrăileanu [1871, Târgu-Frumos (Moldavia) – 1936, Bucharest]: literary critic. Ibrăileanu was the son of a merchant. From 1883 to 1890, he received primary, secondary and high school education in his native town. In 1890, he enrolled in the University of Iași, from which he graduated in 1896. For the next decade, he was a substitute professor, first in Bacău (1896–1900) and then in Iași (1900–1908). In 1906, together with the social theorist Constantin Stere (1865–1936), he founded the *Viața românească* (Romanian life), which would become one of the most important journals of early twentieth-century Romania. Ideologically opposed to traditionalist *Sămănătorul* (The sower), *Viața românească* professed a form of leftist populism. It is in this journal that Stere published his study ‘Social Democracy or Poporanism?’ in 1907 and 1908, which is considered to be the programmatic document of Romanian populist thinking. In 1912, Ibrăileanu received his doctoral degree and became a full professor at the University of Iași, a position he held until 1933. In 1918, his candidacy for the ‘Romanian Academy’ was rejected. In 1920, the journal *Viața românească* resumed its publication, and in 1930 was moved from Iași to Bucharest. In 1933, Ibrăileanu left its editorial committee due to an illness. His health deteriorated in 1934 and he died in 1936. Together with **Titu Maiorescu** and **Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea**, Ibrăileanu became a central point of reference for Romanian literary criticism, while his *Poporanist* ideas influenced many of the economic theories of national development that emerged during the interwar period. As a promoter of the theory of ‘national specificity,’ following the tradition inaugurated by **Mihail Kogălniceanu**, Ibrăileanu was associated with various traditionalist ideas, both during the interwar period and after 1945. He became part of the national canon during the 1970s, when historians of culture and sociologists re-considered his theories and tailored them to fit their alternative interpretation of Romania’s protracted cultural development, and by extension, its intellectual trajectory.

Main works: *Spiritul critic în cultura română* [The critical spirit in Romanian culture] (1909); *Scriitori și curente* [Writers and currents] (1909); *Note și impresii* [Notes and impressions] (1920); *Cultură și literatură* [Culture and literature] (1921); *Studii literare* [Literary studies] (1931).

Context

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Romania was affected by a violent peasant revolt. Its origins, ways of manifestation, and most importantly, its brutal suppression by the government questioned both the content and the directions of Romania's political and cultural development. One of the first cultural reactions to the new situation was the publication of *Viața românească* in March 1906. Some of the most influential Romanian writers of the time contributed to this new journal. A new intellectual current was thus born: *Poporanism* (from *popor*, 'people'). Although it was a derivation of the Russian *narodnichestvo*, its adherents (particularly Constantin Stere) refused any identification with Russian populism, claiming that *Poporanism* was the result of particular Romanian conditions.

The *Poporanists* shared with the *Sămănătorists* several assumptions about the character of Romanian society, including the praise of rural communities, organicism and limited state intervention. However, contrary to the *Sămănătorist* ideology, *Poporanism* manifested an open preference for the modernization of Romania. In 'Social Democracy or *Poporanism*?,' for example, Stere argued that Romania's rural character should be preserved, and modernization should imply, first and foremost, the economic and social progress of the peasantry. *Poporanism* did not necessarily advocate the transformation of the peasantry, but specifically supported the improvement of small and medium peasant property. In other words, their main concern was the creation of a middle class between the peasantry and urban bourgeoisie. In many ways, the entire strategy pursued by 'Romanian life' implied a radical cultural and social program directed towards the autonomy of the cultural sphere. Consequently, culture and politics were to be separated and the intellectuals were to become the guardians of the nation's morality, which had been abandoned by corrupt politicians.

Ibrăileanu pursued this argument further in 'The critical spirit in Romanian culture.' He openly declared that Romanians, though a creative nation, did not contribute significantly to the formation of European civilization. In addition to their lack of creativity, Romanians uncritically adopted everything in uncritical fashion from Western Europe. The history of Romanian culture, claimed Ibrăileanu, was simply the history of assimilating ideas and intellectual models

originating abroad. However, this process of complete imitation was beneficial to Romanian culture, which, as a result, became part of European civilization. By assessing the influence of these processes of imitation and appropriation, Ibrăileanu attempted to map out the so-called 'critical spirit' of Romanian culture, in other words, the cultural negotiation between Romanian intellectuals and the Western models they had emulated within the last two centuries.

According to Ibrăileanu, this negotiation took two forms: one was innovative, the other was critical. In the nineteenth century, out of the principalities that would constitute the modern Romanian state, Wallachia represented the innovative and Moldavia the critical spirit. While Wallachia was characterized by revolutionary ideas, political action and radical attitudes, Moldavia was preoccupied with culture and the reception of Western ideas. This is why, explained Ibrăileanu, in 1848, there was a revolution in Wallachia while only an ill-prepared conspiracy took place in Moldavia. By persisting in charting the expressions of these two forms, Ibrăileanu suggested a cultural difference between Wallachia and Moldavia. The contemporary state of Romanian culture, he therefore claimed, was the result of a synthesis between Wallachia's predilection for social and political action and Moldavia's preference for reflexive activities, culture and literature. Both forms, innovative and critical, were important in defining modern Romanian culture. Wallachia (politics) and Moldavia (culture) were always in a symbiotic relationship. The reason why modern Romanian culture did not compare favorably to other European cultures was, according to Ibrăileanu, because the innovative and critical spirit did not support each other constructively.

Ibrăileanu's theories of symbolic geography were not particularly encouraged by the communist regime. During the 1970s and 1980s, when discussions about the national character again engaged Romanian intellectuals, there were few references to his assumptions about Romania's contested cultural heritage. Not surprisingly, after 1989, Ibrăileanu did not enjoy a period of revival or re-adaptation to the new intellectual debates like other intellectuals of his generations, although some of those who had used his ideas during communism continued to argue for a much-needed reassessment of his theories.

MT

The critical spirit in Romanian culture

The Romanian nation has not had the luck and honor of contributing to the formation of European culture. For well-known historical reasons, it had to lose all cultural wealth brought here by the [Roman] colonists, and to live,

for over a thousand years, a life of shepherding, while western peoples, heirs to the ancient culture, have been able to not only preserve the heritage, but also to enhance it. And both parts, European culture and the Romanian people, have suffered from this. European culture has also lost, because a string which might have been sonorous failed to vibrate.

But if the Romanian nation did not participate directly in the development of European culture, it has had a significant indirect contribution. It was one of the cliffs in the east, into which the barbarian peoples came up against, expending their energy, and had they reached the west with all their initial momentum, these would have made civilization impossible. After the storm set—it has never died out altogether; it is still in a latent state—the Romanian people started to benefit from the culture accumulated in the west, and that benefit was not undeserved, for it had been paid and it is still paid for it dearly, but has had no right upon it, though, as I have said before, it has contributed indirectly to its formation.

There is no nation that has not borrowed from others. From the very fact that European culture has been created by several peoples; it results that each owes something to the others. Germanic peoples borrowed from the Roman culture, and all modern peoples have done is to develop the ancient culture. Eighteenth century France borrowed from the English, eighteenth century Germany borrowed from the French, present-day France, in literature, has borrowed from the Scandinavians and the Russians, so-and-so literary school in one country is the follower of so-and-so literary school in another. There are borrowings in science, etc.

The Romanians, who have produced almost nothing, have borrowed almost everything. The entire history of the Romanian culture, from the middle ages to this day, is the history of introduction of foreign culture to Romanian lands; and the entire history of the Romanian culture, since the sixteenth century, has been but the introduction of foreign culture to Romanian lands and its assimilation by the Romanians—with short obstacles during the Phanariot and Russian rule. [...]

Those who rose against the peoples of 1848, without rising against earlier foreign influences, are, even if unintentionally, defenders of Phanariotism¹ and Russianism, for before the European influence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the country was Phanariotized, and a nasty Russian influ-

¹ The political regimes characterizing Moldavia and Wallachia between 1711 and 1822, when the ruling princes were appointed by the Ottoman Sultan from the wealthy Greek community living in the Fener (*Gr. Fanari*) district of Istanbul.

ence was increasingly emerging. European influence of the seventeenth century had been annihilated. In fact, that influence of the seventeenth century would not have pleased them, either, for—just to speak about Moldavia—there was a western influence there: a Polish influence, and it is obvious that what our doctrinaire conservatives are scared by are the European influences, not the oriental ones, for “the old regime,” the oldest one, was the result of the Slavic-Bulgarian impact, and the newer one was of the Turkish-Byzantine. [...]

The Romanian nation, in the entire course of its history, up to the nineteenth century, underwent the cultural influence of the oriental currents, apart for small exceptions: Polish culture at the end of the seventeenth century, and the French culture of older France at the end of the eighteenth century.

In the nineteenth century, history set the Romanians the following problem: will Romania continue to be an oriental, half-Asian country, or will it enter the ranks of the European peoples and European culture? This problem was also solved by history. For different reasons, Romania has not been able to escape European influences. European civilization, especially in its French form and influence, reached our lands. It reached us, as it has other European countries, through pressure, imitation and for reasons of need. Through pressure, because a European country cannot escape the invasion of a civilization which is superior and which tends to dictate to the entire continent—and indeed on the entire earth—the same political forms and the same culture. [...]

The need for the western civilization, and especially in its French form, is translated in the political-social order in two ideas or feelings, fecund and absolutely necessary to the ruined and subjugated Romanian countries: democracy and nationalism. Romanian lands were at the discretion of powerful neighbors, and those who have felt the shame and misfortune of this situation—people who wished to take the Romanian nation out of this yoke and make it a great successful people, with the right to make its voice heard—could not help being fascinated by the nationalist conception, thanks to revolutionary France.

And if the country was subjugated by powerful neighbors, then the majority of the country, the living elements, which produced the wealth and preserved untouched the national spirit—wealth and spirit that were to make the future of the Romanian country—that element was subjugated to the class that was stifling it. The desire of the enlightened spirits to reveal and put to good use all that this element could give found its justification, and theory, a guiding star, in the concept called democracy spread by revolutionary France. Nationalism and democracy—and democracy especially as a means for na-

tionalism—this is what made the enlightened people introduce into the Romanian countries western culture, the culture which would have reached us, even in the absence of all these, through pressure. [...]

All that could make this people a people of the future was necessary, and all that could stifle some fortunate, specifically national characteristics was unnecessary. Foreign culture was meant to use the energy of the people, and not to suppress any of these energies. To use a somewhat vulgar comparison, foreign culture was meant to feed the living organism of the Romanian people, making it robust and apt for creative work, and it was not meant to have the role of those substances which, instead of giving power to the organism, weaken it, predestine it to death, either by not satisfying the needs of the organism, or by overfeeding it.

To know what and how to take from a foreign culture, we needed much clear thinking. We needed to understand the foreign culture and the social circumstances of the country and the soul of this people, and to possess a clear idea of the goal that was to be pursued. In other words, we needed an enlightened critical spirit, but at the same time something constructive to facilitate the introduction and assimilation of this culture.

The definition of this critical spirit, its role and evolution are the subject of the preceding pages. We have seen in these pages that the influence of foreign cultures has been felt in all fields of Romanian life. We have focused more on those that we had found interesting: language, literature and social-political organization. We believe that by talking about these aspects of culture, we have implicitly talked about others, too, which are reduced all to what we call morals, the type of social life, etc.

In the introduction of western culture it is obvious that only those people who started off on the right path and have indeed toiled for the genuine progress of the country have embodied in themselves the tendency to introduce western culture and critical spirit, the spirit to tell one thing from another, a clear vision of what was necessary and what was not.

Limitless imitators of western culture, like those who have only been refractory critics of any innovative activity, must have been fatally wrong. They did not have the necessary, uniquely necessary attitude to make western culture bear the best fruit here. The former sought to introduce what was not needed, and the latter sought to stop the introduction of what was necessary. [...]

Afterwards, these two tendencies separate. Wallachian liberalism, in its extreme manifestations, remains the representative of innovative spirit; the Moldavian youth represents the critical, negative spirit. This gap has been a

curse for Romania's contemporary history. Some do not employ the necessary critical thinking; others deny ceaselessly the need of the former's work. Some do not have any clear plan; others want us to stay where we are.

And as we cannot remain where we are, as it can never be done, and as criticism is becoming passive and clearly negative, the introduction of western culture is short of the much needed assistance of the critical spirit. *Juni-mea* wants us to remain where we are, if not go back somehow. Eminescu wants us to return to where we have been. The socialists want us to jump who knows where, into the unknown.

But we can neither stay where we are or go back, nor jump into the unknown and the impossible. Therefore, the preaching of those who wanted these things could only have been a preaching in the desert. The retreat in the critical mood of expectation of so many enlightened minds—the absence of so many enlightened minds from the work that would move us nicely and critically forward—has paid off. In this absence, among other things, we find the explanation of where we are today.

Translated by Mária Kovács

GIORGOS SKLIROS: OUR SOCIAL QUESTION

Title: *Τό κοινωνικόν μας ζήτημα* (Our social question)

Original Published: Αθήνα, n.p., June 1907

Language: Greek

The excerpts used are from the second edition of *Τό κοινωνικόν μας ζήτημα*, ed. by Nikos Yannios (Athens: Σοσιαλιστικό Κέντρο Ἀθηνῶν, 1922), with the subtitle Ἀφιερώνεται στὸν Ἑλληνα Ἑργάτη, Γ.Σκληρός, pp. 44–49.

About the author

Giorgos Skliros (born **Giorgos Konstantinidis**) [1878, Trabzon (*Gr.* Trapezounta, present-day Turkey) – 1919, Alexandria]: medical doctor and socialist theorist. He was born into a well-off bourgeois family. At a young age, he was sent by his family to Odessa and then to Moscow, where he studied medicine. There, he became familiar with socialist ideas, especially Georgi Plekhanov's theories. In 1905, he participated in the workers' uprising in St Petersburg where he adopted the penname 'Skliros.' Due to his revolutionary activity, in 1906, he fled to Jena, where, between 1907 and 1911, he interacted with other young Greek intellectuals of the time who were also students. Together with Dimitris Glinos, who would later become a prominent figure of the socialist movement in Greece, he played an important role in the founding of the *Φιλική Προοδευτική Ένωση* (Progressive union of friends). In 1907, he published the essay 'Our social question,' which earned him immediate fame. After 'Our social question,' he published two articles in the newspaper *Νουμάς* as part of the debate initiated by his book. In 1909, he published the essay 'The Eastern Question,' which referred to the political reality of the era following the Young Turk revolution. However, his bad health, financial problems, and the pressure exerted by his brother and relatives to complete his studies did not allow him much time for other activities. In 1912, he settled in Alexandria, and until his death contributed extensively to the reviews *Νέα Ζωή* (New life) and *Γράμματα* (Letters). In 1919, an article entitled 'The current problems of Hellenism,' as well as another in memory of Plekhanov appeared in the *Γράμματα*. In this last one, he criticized Lenin and Trotsky, and condemned the Bolshevik Revolution as a *coup d'état*. During the last years of his life, Skliros became more conservative. The First World War and especially the Russian Revolution had turned the conflict between the adherents of Bolshevism and the socialists such as **Abraham Benaroya**, into a definite rupture in Greece. By his first biographer, the Marxist historian Yiannis Kordatos (1891–1961) Skliros was accused of confusing pre-Marxist materialism with dialectic materialism. However,

during the 1970s and 1980s, when the debate over social democracy resurfaced after the splitting of the Communist Party in 1968, figures like Skliros and their intellectual contribution assumed a central role in political debates.

Main works: *Τό κοινωνικόν μας ζήτημα* [Our social question] (1907); *Τό Ζήτημα τῆς Ανατολῆς* [The eastern question] (1909); *Τά σύγχρονα προβλήματα τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ* [The current problems of Hellenism] (1919); *Ἡ φιλοσοφία τοῦ πολέμου καί τῆς εἰρήνης* [The philosophy of war and peace] (1923).

Context

Socialist activity had already appeared in Greece by the 1880s. The most important figure of that period was Platon Drakoulis (see **Abraham Benaroya**, *The socialist frenzy of two decades*). The same period witnessed the development of the demoticists' movement organized around **Ioannis Psicharis** which promoted the use of the Greek vernacular. This first generation of demoticists did not connect the 'Language question' with the 'Social question.' In their view, the implementation of the demotic version of the language would contribute to the regeneration of the nation and to the accomplishment of the 'Great Idea,' the irredentist vision of annexing to the Hellenic Kingdom all Ottoman territories inhabited by Greek-Orthodox populations. Actually, this group consisted of established bourgeois figures unfavorable towards socialist ideals. In 1902, they sponsored the publication of the review *Νομῶς* under the directorship of Dimitris Tagopoulos (1867–1926). Despite its limited audience, the new review developed into a forum for the debate of all contemporary young intellectuals, and constituted a means for the propagation of the demotic language.

However, a second generation of demoticists gradually took the lead. Much more aware of contemporary socialist ideas, these young intellectuals had studied in Germany, mostly in Jena and Berlin, where the debate over social democracy and revolutionary Marxism was vivid. For them, the 'Language question' was interrelated with the 'Social question.' Therefore, the issue at stake was not the accomplishment of the 'Great Idea' but an educational reform, one of many reforms that the country desperately needed. Figures such as Alexandros Delmouzos (1880–1956), Manolis Triantafyllidis (1883–1959) and Dimitris Glinos (1882–1943) played a key role in the debates. They founded the *Ἑκπαιδευτικός Ὀμιλος* (Educational association) in 1911, which constituted the most important vehicle for the propagation of the demotic language. They were also politically active in the Liberal Party and were given the opportunity, especially during the second term of **Eleftherios**

Venizelos's government (1917–1920), to pursue radical educational reforms. However, contrary to Psycharis and others who did not live in Greece, these young intellectuals had to face the inertia of the system. Delmouzos, the educational expert of the group who had been appointed the director of the Girls' School at Volos for three years (1908–1911), was accused of damaging public morality as he introduced the demotic language in school teaching. He was tried and found guilty for that.

Thus, at the dawn of the new century, a number of thinkers managed to articulate a new political agenda. It is within this intellectual atmosphere, in a period of profound criticism and demands for social change, that Skliros' seminal work 'Our social question' appeared. The largest part of the book dwells upon Marxist theory, providing a schematic description while focusing on 'class struggle' and the character of historical development both in Europe and in Greece. In Greek society, Skliros points out, unlike the European case, the indigenous aristocracy had vanished due to the Ottoman conquest, and thus the Orthodox population had to attach itself to the only institution available, their Church. However, increasing contact with the West contributed to the development of a diaspora bourgeois class, which, in the end, played a key role in the "national awakening." Thus, the Greek revolution was of a "bourgeois character" but also inspired by "aristocratic ideals." Following that, Skliros presents an account of the contemporary ideological atmosphere in Greece, pointing out that ever since the independence, there had been two political and intellectual trends in Greek society. The first one, based on "imagination" attached to the 'Great Idea,' supported the expansion of the state and the "reestablishment of the Byzantine Empire." This trend would not pay any attention to social issues. The other trend was based on reality, considered the policy of expansionism catastrophic and gave priority to social reform, but failed to generate a strong popular appeal.

The publication of the book triggered a heated debate among the demotists, since they had to take sides on whether they considered language a national or a social issue. The introduction of Marxist analysis gave the discussion a new twist. Alexandros Delmouzos first published an article entitled *Πρός τούς Δημοτικιστάς* (To the demotists) in *Νομῆς*, a review of Skliros' text that stimulated further debate. The main issue at stake was whether certain Marxist principles could be applied to the interpretation of Greek history and society, or to the specific role of the demotist movement in class struggle. The demotists who participated in the debate would either adopt or reject Skliros' analysis, based on the priority given to the 'National question.' Thus, the first group was called *νασιοναλιστές* (nationalists), most prominent

among them being the poet and critic Petros Vlastos (1879–1941) and the diplomat and theorist **Ion Dragoumis**. The second group was called *σοσιαλιστές* (socialists), and included major figures such as Alexandros Delmouzos and the novelist Costantinos Hatzopoulos (1868–1920).

Skliros' arguments were taken up by the most significant Marxist historian of the time, Yiannis Kordatos, who published the *Ἡ κοινωνική σημασία τῆς Ἐπανάστασης τοῦ 21* (The social significance of the 1821 revolution) in 1924. Kordatos argued that, after the mid-eighteenth century, a Greek bourgeois class emerged by taking advantage of the new trade opportunities. This class played a crucial role in the conception and implementation of the Greek revolution. Thus, the bourgeois elite was attributed a progressive role. Moreover, it was argued that Greece had already achieved the bourgeois stage of society and that it was time for a socialist transformation. Kordatos' work was met with a fierce reaction both from the Right and the Communist Left. On the left, the Stalinist wing, which became predominant after the Sixth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party (1934), condemned Kordatos for serving the interests of the bourgeoisie. Yannis Zevgos (1897–1947), a major figure of the Communist Party, objected to Kordatos by arguing that the bourgeois class had betrayed the Greek popular struggle of 1821. Moreover, he claimed, during the nineteenth century, the bourgeois class only profited from favorable royal concessions and would not do anything to improve the social conditions of the populace. On the right, the reaction to the critique of historical continuity between Modern and Ancient Greece was even fiercer. In many schools, students were suspended for reading the book, and in certain cases professors were even fired for teaching it. The Holy Synod of the Greek Church issued a critical response to the book, refuting in particular the way Kordatos described the role of the clergy in the Revolution.

Skliros's intellectual legacy, popularized and also fiercely contested, re-emerged in the 1980s. Historians such as Rena Stavridou-Patrikiou have demonstrated the significance of his work by focusing both on his intellectual impact as well as his involvement in contemporary social and political debates.

Our social question

[...] Indeed, the character of our revolution was greatly confused. Deep down it was a bourgeois revolution, brought about by the unprecedented prosperity of the inner and outer bourgeois elements, and by the awakening of a national sentiment, especially among the developed bourgeois classes and by the nation's *literati*.

Certainly, the contribution of the example of the French revolution was not slight, nor was that of the general awakening of the bourgeois elements in Western Europe.

Besides this, however, [our revolution] also bore many lordly, warlike, semi-feudal elements which were placed together with the clergy at the head of the movement. While the most important thing was that, officially, the revolution was not of a social character, class against class, but of a racial, national one, its purpose being the political liberation of the entire nation from the foreign race. Add to this that this nation was the Hellenic one, that is to say the descendants of that ancient glorious Greece, while the tyrant race were the barbarian, heathen Turk, and you will understand why the European aristocracy was not unfavorably disposed towards the Greek revolution. Having declared the revolution in the name of the "great traditions of Greece," the Greeks tended, mainly intellectually and psychologically, towards the nearest Byzantine-Christian traditions, with which they had a direct psychological connection.

Their ideal was the possible re-establishment of the former Hellenic Byzantine state, which went on to be crystallized in the fairly utopian "Great Idea," a mixture of confused past aristocratic and present bourgeois ideas and instincts. In this way, the Greek revolution, born mainly on the basis of bourgeois material prosperity and development, was waged in the name of fairly aristocratic ideals and traditions.

In any event, the nation gained its liberty, having in its hands an entire heritage of traditions and ideals of a mostly aristocratic character, in the name of which it had declared the revolution.

And now there were only two paths for it to follow: the path of reality, which was in accordance to the existing powers and the existing factors or the path of the great historical traditions, which, when put into action, did not correspond completely to the conditions of the past, and did not rest upon actually existing factors and data.

According to the first path, sensing its small powers, its bourgeois character and the major change of the historic and social conditions compared to the former Byzantine regime, the young Hellenic nation had to adopt tactics which would be as realistic as possible and which would be limited to the collection, organization and development of its own economic, moral and intellectual powers; moreover, with the contribution of the people's natural intelligence, it was possible, through judicious and systematic work, for this to be achieved in a relatively short time, transforming Greece into a model of a civilized Eastern state, a kind of "Eastern Switzerland," which

would win the true admiration of Western Europe and which would act as a shining beacon, towards which all the peoples enslaved by Turkey would instinctively turn. These tactics would also have the other great advantage of leaving the state free of any historical traditions, usually of a conservative and retrograde character; this would allow it to rid itself, without difficulty, of any dead and harmful element which had survived by virtue of the ages-long slavery, to bring about easily whatever social reforms, both practical and beneficial, in accordance with the general spirit of civilization, and, in general, to be equipped with a progressive, liberal and democratic spirit, in accordance, after all, with the nation's bourgeois foundation. This could be one path. The other, the one of the "great historical traditions" and "historical law," would necessarily produce a different character, and give completely opposite results. According to this [path], passing over its true powers, its bourgeois foundation and the ensuing great historical changes, the new state should consider itself as the sole legal representative and heir of the former aristocratic Byzantine state, and aim, as much as possible, at its full re-establishment under its original form and its Hellenic foundation; but since this was hampered by many new and serious factors, these had to be ignored at any cost, to be supplanted, replaced by others which exist only in the imagination, etc. In this way, two worlds of reality came into being: the one was the true [world], [the world] of action, [the world] which was important to all the non-Hellenic world, and the other was that of the imagination, the one which was not recognized by the outside world, but which was of absolute importance to the Hellenes! The results of this dualism I believe can be easily understood by all. Once Greece had decided to walk the path of the "great historical traditions," as a natural consequence it had to submit and yield to an entire series of disastrous, yet unavoidable consequences. [...]

Which of these two paths should the reborn Greece take? The path of reality or that of tradition? And even if we all agree that the first path would be preferable in all respects and would, without fail, give the best civilizing and other results, I believe no less that there will be no one who will imagine that it would ever be psychologically possible for the nation to follow such tactics and such a judicious path! This would require another development, another psychology, another era... The nation which struggled and was liberated in the name of the "greater Greece," by virtue of its psychology and its development and its era, could only take the path of the "great traditions."

This was unavoidable, inevitable and, as such, any criticism at this point is redundant. Another issue [is] to what degree did this policy of "traditions"

benefit and what results did it produce. Here, a strictly objective criticism is unavoidable and mandatory because the [conclusions] drawn may benefit us in the future by indicating the weak and disastrous points of the tactics [followed] so far, and thus inducing [the nation] to change, reform or even abandon them.

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

BOHDAN PAVLŮ: PROGRESSIVISM AND CONSERVATISM IN SLOVAKIA

Title: *Pokrokovosť a konzervativizmus na Slovensku* (Progressivism and conservatism in Slovakia)

Originally published: In *Prúdy* 2, 1910, No. 2, pp. 49–65.

Language: Slovak

The excerpts used are from Rudolf Chmel, ed., *Hlasy v prúdoch času* (Bratislava: Tatran 1983), pp. 128–134.

About the author

Bohdan Pavlů [1883, Spešov (south Moravia) – 1938, Bosanski Novi (Bosnia)]: journalist, literary critic, translator and diplomat. He studied law in Prague, Vienna and Budapest. He could not conclude his studies, and from 1903 he started to work as a journalist. He belonged to a group of young Slovak intelligentsia formed around the review *Prúdy* (Streams). Until 1914 he was an editor of the *Slovenský týdeník* (Slovak weekly) and contributed also to *Národní listy* (National papers) and the journal *Čas* (Time) close to **Tomáš G. Masaryk**. At the beginning of the First World War he fought at the Eastern front, defected to the Russian side and became an active organizer of the pro-Entente Czechoslovak Legions in Russia. In 1917, he was elected to the Czechoslovak National Committee branch in Russia and after the establishment of the Republic he served as its political representative in Siberia. After his return to Czechoslovakia in 1920 he became the editor-in-chief of the *Slovenský denník* (Slovak daily) starting to work again as a diplomat two years later. He served as the Czechoslovak ambassador to Bulgaria between 1922 and 1927, and to Denmark between 1927 and 1932. In 1935 he was sent as the first Czechoslovak ambassador to USSR for a two year term. He died in a car accident during a visit to Yugoslavia as the deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was an active translator, primarily of Russian literature.

Main works: *Literárne túžby* [Literary desires] (1907).

Context

Until the end of the nineteenth century, the Slovak National Party, established out of the ‘Old Slovak School’ in 1871, was the leading political body and its main goals continued to be based upon the ‘Memorandum of the Slo-

vak Nation' from 1861. Prominent among those goals were the claim for national and cultural autonomy within a separate Slovak territory in Upper Hungary, the opposition to forced Magyarization and the spread of Slovak in public life and education (see **Ján Palárik**, *What should we expect from the Hungarian constitution for our nationality and what do we need most now?*). At the end of the century, however, various groups emerged within and around the Party critical to the conservative ways and ideas of the leadership, which was based in Turčiansky Svätý Martin (*Hun.* Turócszentmárton). The challengers reproached the leaders such as Svetozár Hurban Vajanský or Pavol Mudroň for their passive approach to politics, their Romantic political ideals which made them incapable of dealing with the changing social and economic realities, and their messianism and Romantic pan-Slavism, conjoined with the hope that Russia would liberate the Slovaks from national oppression.

One dissenting group was formed by the representatives of political Catholicism, such as Andrej Hlinka and Ferdiš Juriga, who in 1913 established the Slovak People's Party. Another group that built their identity in opposition to 'Martin conservatism' was formed around the progressivist review *Hlas* (Voice) which was founded in 1898. Up until its closure in 1904, this journal acted as the tribune for the movement of young critical intellectuals called *hlasizmus*. The movement emerged from among the Slovak students at universities in Prague, Vienna and Budapest, and was strongly influenced by the ideas of Czech political realism represented mainly by **Tomáš G. Masaryk**, professor of sociology in Prague. The leading figures of the *Hlas* group such as Vavro Šrobár, Pavol Blaho and **Milan Hodža** took up the main elements of Masaryk's pragmatic philosophy and developed the concept of *drobná práce* (the petit work), that targeted the economic, social and moral restoration of all strata of Slovak society. Quite naturally, *Hlas* became an important apologist of the idea of close Slovak-Czech political and cultural cooperation. Later on, during the Czechoslovak Republic many 'hlasists' became firm adherents of the concept of Czechoslovakism and served as state officials in the Republic.

Hlas ceased publication in 1904 due to internal strife, and from 1909, another review, *Prúdy* (Streams), took up the same critical stance. While *Hlas* was predominantly politically and ideologically oriented, the younger generation that founded *Prúdy* put more emphasis on literary and cultural matters. Among the main contributors were Bohdan Pavlů—who was sometimes considered to be the main ideologue of the early period—Ivan Markovič, Vladimír Roy, Juraj Slávik and František Votruba. The *Prúdy* group, which

wanted to introduce modern ideas of scientific rationalism and democratic participation to Slovak society, defended modern art and also advocated Slovak–Czech cooperation. They were critical of Martin’s old conservatives and what they understood to be the Romantic heritage. At the same time, however, they tried to find ways for a dialogue between the two generations. Similarly, they sought new opportunities for Slovak–Magyar cooperation, and found support among the new generation of Hungarian intellectuals from the civic radicals grouped around **Oszkár Jászi** and especially their younger representatives gathered around the Budapest ‘Galilei Circle’ (K. Polányi, G. Pólya). Many of Jászi’s political essays and articles were translated and published in *Prúdy*. The essay below was the result of the April meeting of the Slovak university youth in Budapest in 1910, where the participants solicited Bohdan Pavlů to elaborate on the central topic of progressivism and conservatism in Slovak society. With its emphasis on democratic participation, rationalism and social dialogue it represents the most salient features of the Slovak progressivism of that time.

With its strong pro-democratic, modernist and secularizing agenda, along with a strong affection for Czech culture and politics, the *Prúdy* group clearly remained rather marginal in the Slovak politics of its time. By 1922, as the journal continued its publication, Pavlů and the founding generation was replaced by more explicit exponents of Czechoslovakist ideology (F. Kaláč, F. Houdek, A. Štefánek), which only furthered its political marginalization within the Slovak environment. In cultural terms, however, the journal served as an important forum for some of the most progressive Slovak modernist artists. Both the *Hlas* as well as the *Prúdy* groups are considered by Slovak historians as important turn-of-the-century alternative voices whose radical criticism significantly contributed to the cultural modernization as well as critical self-reflection of Slovak society and politics.

PL–MK

Progressivism and conservatism in Slovakia

[...]

The national revival

The reasons for Slovak stagnation were first discovered thanks to a group of authors publishing their articles in *Hlas* revue. In Lassalle’s opinion, speaking out on matters as they really are is the best way to fight against some ideas. The *Hlas* revue group voiced their opinions, but they needed such great moral strength to do so in that period of time, that we even fail to fully

recognize the importance of their efforts today. The *Hlas* revue group had to destroy the prejudice which prevented it from implementing new ideas and the prejudice obstructing the revival of old but forgotten traditions applicable in modern times. For example, they emphasized the idea that the strength of the nation lay in the common people contrary to the theory promoted at that time, which replaced Werbőczy's¹ tribal aristocracy with Renan's spiritual aristocracy and considered intellectuals as representatives of the nation. Paradoxically, when the *Hlas* revue group emphasized a moral revival, and the good accord of the internal and external worlds with the forgotten principles of goodness and love taken from Christian doctrine, and at the same time opposed these principles against spiritual Magyarization, Mr Kvačala,² the innocent professor of theology, suddenly could not understand which Christian principles they meant. The *Hlas* revue group represented the necessary and comprehensive movement against conservatism and Romanticism. The *Hlas* revue group supported active policy against passive one, reliance in the power of common people against the hope of the support of the Russian tsar's autocracy, constitutional struggle and the universal right to vote against marginalized political freedoms, and the importance of education and welfare against political cure-alls. The romantically-oriented Slovak society previously disrespected prosaic and low-valued business activities. It was fashionable to speak about "high" matters: high ideals, the High Tatras, the high flight of the Slavonic eagle, high politics and the higher social strata. The *Hlas* revue group had to come to demonstrate the needful role of business activities within the national struggle and their equivalence to parties, balls, salutes, speeches, theatre performances and similar activities of the golden Slovak youth. The *Hlas* revue group movement represented the return from fantasy to reality, from speculation to empiricism, from feelings to reason, and from words to action.

During the short time of their movement, which was interrupted several times and interfered by a number of side issues, the *Hlas* revue group did a great deal of work. They succeeded in bringing the idea of Slovak nationality to the broad population, and in considerably refreshing the literal, political and economic life, and in eliminating many social prejudices. However, they did not have enough time and energy for the basic change *in capite ei mem-*

¹ István Werbőczy (c. 1465–1541): Hungarian jurist and statesman who codified the noble privileges after the peasant revolt of György Dózsa in 1514.

² Ján Kvačala (1862–1934): Slovak theologian and one of the founders of the modern Comeniana studies.

bris.³ We all are to recognize future tasks and to be helpful in their performance. We must not take the position of an idle and indifferent bystander. We also reject any reproach for neglecting traditions, and for promoting nothing but new ideas without any respect for the past. Each supporter of progress must be aware of the fact that nothing builds on nothing, that progress is not revolution but rather evolution and that progress cannot be reached through upheaval but through reform. That means that each supporter of progress must build the future on the groundwork of the past. A supporter of progress must also understand that a bearer of progress should not be short on criticism, justice, and truth and devotion to his or her conviction. We should examine the health of the nation and keep what is worthy to be kept; but let us eliminate everything, which is unfit and rotten, and we will manage to find—both among the old values and present ideals—the values worthy of further development.

Democratic principles

Our greatest hopes are based on the healthy features of the common Slovak people who managed to keep free of the Romanticism and Oblomov-like manners of Slovak intellectuals. Several years ago, Vavro Šrobár⁴ was right when he underlined as valuable features of common people their tenacity and self-support. He mentioned the example of Slovak emigration, which represented the natural and self-supporting response of an exploited and god-forsaken nation which managed to save itself from physical destruction. More than at any time before, we should aim at discovering and awaking the deep-hidden strength of the common people. New conditions set our static countryside moving. Nowadays, Slovaks are more interested in presidential elections in America than in the appointment of a new minister in Austria. Changes implemented in the United States affect the social situation of Slovaks more than the ones implemented in Austria. Slovakia is no more separated from the surrounding world by the Chinese wall. The streams of developing European ideas, society, literature, politics and economy have reached Slovakia at last. We cannot understand any period of Slovak national history, if we fail to observe its connection with the world abroad. For example, the European movement for political freedom, which resulted in revolution in 1848, also influenced developments in Slovakia. The large development of

³ In the minds of its members.

⁴ Vavro Šrobár (1867–1950): Slovak physician and politician, one of the key figures of the *Hlas* movement and supporter of Czechoslovakism in the interwar period.

transportation in the nineteenth century also changed the Slovak idyll, notwithstanding the intensive protests of local patriots. Slovakia could not escape, by hook or by crook, the influence of the liberal economy, which victoriously marched all over the world setting farmers free of servitude and establishing the freedom of movement and trade. Even though Slovakia managed to steel itself against a number of progressive ideas, it does not mean that the country will wear this armor forever and that Slovakia will continue to be the unshaken fortress of social, literary and religious conservatism. The wave of the *Hlas* revue group is so high, that it can never be stopped.

Religion

There is a saying used in Slovakia: They are going to stir up mud! However, is the surface of the Slovak nation's soul really clear? Don't you think it has been already muddied due to the cardinal dualism resulting from differences between Catholic and Protestant churches? Aren't there some remains of ancient Slav pantheism at the bottom of the Slovak soul, coming up in the form of a strange identification with nature? The days of the Russian two-faith religion⁵ are definitely gone, but Christianity in Slovakia hasn't yet succeeded in uprooting pagan traditions, but only in establishing some new superstitions. It is not true that Slovak farmers are not able to think, even though many people would like them to be of that kind. It was a farmer and a Catholic from the West who said: "We believe them (clergymen), but only when it comes to those things which we do not understand." Don't you consider the campaign of the Blue Cross religious movement, to which Kristína Royová,⁶ a writer, fully devoted to her literary work, or the Baptists and Nazarenes as the evidence of a religious crisis among the common people? Should the intellectual be the only one who is able to stay indifferent? If we tolerate two basic churches, Catholic and Protestant, why *tertium aut quartum non datur*?⁷ Slovak society and students—surprisingly enough—are divided into groups according to their church affiliation. We must be able to escape from this denominational dead end, in which a Magyar Protestant is closer to a Slovak Protestant than a Slovak Catholic and vice versa. Nationality must function as an integrating factor!

⁵ The author refers to late remnants of pre-Christian beliefs in Russia observed till late eighteenth century.

⁶ Kristína Royová (1860–1936), Slovak religious writer and journalist. She was the founder and leader of the evangelical Blue Cross temperance movement.

⁷ Why is there no third or fourth (possibility)?

No religion results in progress. Religion itself must not oppose progress, and science should play the role of Chief Justice. A dispute has arisen in the modern era concerning the question of whether philosophy should become the queen of science, or theology should keep its exclusive rights in this field. Modern man is striving to harmonize his religious beliefs and scientific opinions, and it is understandable that myths must make way for science and that modern man will not support dogmas contradictory to general reason and experience. Modern man will take sides with science in disputes between authority and freedom of research, revelation and reason and experience, mystery and question, infallibility and probability, tradition and criticism, subjectivity and objectivity, which all arise from the controversy between myth and science. However, even modern man cannot avoid the mysterious relationship between our feelings and nature, which Spencer, John Stuart Mill and Lange,⁸ the historian of materialism, wrote about; his religious feelings continue to dominate in this unknown or unknowable area.

The Bible cannot form the basis for solving the problems of a modern state and society. Religion, and churches in particular, have to give up their hopes of the establishment of a theocracy, and the more they turn to the kingdoms which are not of this world, the less they will be endangered by the modern era. The modern era requires churches to make way for subjective beliefs, to divorce themselves from the state and to stay true to their mission. Suppressing attempts at mixing political and religious objectives—that is what the fight against clericalism should be about. I am not sure whether any Slovak theologian, either Catholic or Protestant, would dare to defend the doctrines of Tomas of Aquinas or Martin Luther on the heavenly origin of the authority of the state against the modern Hungarian government.

Backward manners

Prejudices similar to those functioning in the sphere of religion can also be found in social life, literature and politics. Medieval knighthood determines our social manners. A century ago, people in England realized that it was not possible to defend one's honor by head and shoulders, fighting like a ruffian in the local pub, and that reasonable arguments should be submitted to prove the

⁸ Friedrich Albert Lange (1828–1875): German philosopher and political activist, one of the founding figures of the Marburg school of neo-Kantianism. His book, *Geschichte des Materialismus* (History of materialism), published in 1866, was a standard introduction to materialism and the history of philosophy up to the twentieth century.

truth. Similar backward manners can also be found in literature. It is said that literature reflects real life through problems solved in literary works; so we can also say that problems that are not reflected in literary works, are not felt to be pressing in real life. The most significant problems of Slovak life are nationality and democracy. As I have already mentioned in my introduction to Ján Kalinčiak's novel 'The Restoration,'⁹ Slovak national literature had had to travel a long and hard path until it chose common Slovak people as national literary heroes. Slovak writers were convinced that real life was not worth choosing as a subject of larger literary works. Common people and intellectuals continue to inhabit two separated worlds even today. Writers are far from realizing that they can write novels dealing with economic problems and nobody imagines the buried investments in this field. False prudery shuts its eyes to visits to houses of ill repute, and continues believing in the idyllic and innocent lives of the common people, while Hlaváč, the noble literary author, holds the exclusive right to deal with sexual problems (God defend us if we accept the opinions promoted in his book entitled 'Woman and the Heavenly Kingdom').¹⁰ Social and national morals are cheap. People think that a few coppers spent in promoting national objectives are enough to buy indulgences to cover their long-lasting sins. Where does this Jesuit moral come from? I think it originated as the result of theories, which set unrealistically high objectives, but vastly underestimated the practice. Theory was not checked by real life and practice did not rise over theory. This is largely apparent in the attitudes towards literature. Literature is said to be the highest function of the national spirit. However, the biblical verse saying that the letter kills but the spirit gives life has proved to be true especially in this field. The majority of Slovak literature has lost any connection to the spirit of real national life. Slovak literature continues to follow the idea of Romanticism and Hegelianism that there is no need for a poet to study or to observe life around him or her since everything flows from inside and everything can be created from within the soul and heart. I admit that intuition is the main attribute of a poet, but mythical intuition alone results only in romantic escape from reality. Vajanský¹¹ definitely felt the same when

⁹ Ján Kalinčiak (1822–1871): Slovak Romantic writer, poet and friend of Ľudovít Štúr. Most well-known is his novel *Reštvárčia* (The restoration) published in 1860.

¹⁰ Milan Hlaváč (1875–1939): Slovak Protestant religious writer, translator and journalist.

¹¹ Svetozár Hurban Vajanský (1847–1915): the son of J. M. Hurban, one of the leading patriots of the Štúr generation. Vajanský, with broad knowledge and cosmopolitan education, belongs to the main creators of modern Slovak realist prose and poetry. He introduced the genre of the social novel into Slovak literature.

he strongly argued that realism safeguards the harmony of two requirements laid upon literary works—truth and beauty. However, literature has left the requirement of truth and made readers believe impossible and fruitless fantasies, or laugh at literature, which they probably considered a useless luxury. The Philistinism of the majority of people resulted in their disregarding attitudes to literature, hence they dared not to oppose the general Romantic approach to literature, and writers tired of disregarding and disrespecting that which they have to face, stopped writing their best literary works—see the example of Hviezdoslav,¹² the greatest Slovak poet. It is fashionable today to have his poetry in the bookcase, but have we ever read it? I think there is no need to argue that realism in art is not spiritless materialism, since Vajanský already wrote about this issue in detail. The symbolic realism of modern Slovak poetry (Ivan Krasko)¹³ sufficiently documents this fact.

Conclusion

I am not aiming to analyze all open questions in Slovak literature. Poverty is no reproach, but it is necessary to be willing to get away from poverty. However, people are not willing to do that, since they are afraid of the others, who may start shouting “Look, a heretic!” if they start running their business. Strong personalities aware of their mission, and ready to serve it, may succeed in improving the level of national life. The intolerance and autocratic orthodoxy of Slovaks created an environment in which any desire for activity, for freedom of thinking and for new path were nipped in the bud. That is the tragedy of the present Slovak situation, and those are the conditions, which restrain and hurt.

We have no conclusion but one—it is necessary to cure the nation of this illness. The evil must be uprooted. We see that our most significant failure results from the dominion of feelings over reason, belief over science, speculation over empiricism, Romanticism over Realism, autocracy over the rule of people, East over West, and conservatism over progress.

Translated by Pavol Lukáč

¹² Pavol Országh Hviezdoslav (1849–1921): poet, playwright and translator. The greatest poet of nineteenth-century Slovak realism, he introduced syllabic-tonic verse into Slovak poetry.

¹³ Ivan Krasko, real name Ján Botto (1876–1958): Slovak poet and writer. He was a major representative of Slovak modernist literature.

JOSEF PEKAŘ: THE MEANING OF CZECH HISTORY

Title: *Smysl českých dějin* (The meaning of Czech history)

Originally published: lecture delivered on November 5, 1928, published by Josef Pekař at his own expenses in Prague, 1929

Language: Czech

The excerpts used are from Josef Pekař, *O smyslu českých dějin* (Prague: Rozmluvy 1990), pp. 383–405.

About the author

Josef Pekař [1870, Malý Rohozec (near Turnov, *Ger.* Turnau, north Bohemia) – 1937 Prague]: historian. Born into a farming family, he studied at a grammar school in Mladá Boleslav. Later, he studied history and geography at Charles University in Prague. In 1897, he became a private docent with his work on the history of the Wallenstein conspiracy. In 1905, he became a professor. Later, he also served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and between 1931 and 1932, as the rector of Charles University. For thirty years he was an editor of the prestigious *Český časopis historický* (Czech historical journal) and founder of several publications and bibliographic projects. Pekař was a pupil of Antonín Rezek and Jaroslav Goll and became one of the leading positivist historians in the first third of the twentieth century. He was also an influential teacher of several generations of historians. He critically re-examined **František Palacký**'s historical work and offered a reinterpretation, particularly on the earlier period of the Bohemian state, the fifteenth-century Hussites and the era following the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. Though critical of integral nationalism, Pekař supported the state right policies as an argument for Bohemian political autonomy, while warning against the dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. On account of his criticism of the nationality and social policies in interwar Czechoslovakia and his stress on the importance of German and aristocratic culture in Bohemian history, his work was also appreciated by some Sudeten German intellectuals and was later appropriated for pro-Nazi propaganda. For this reason and for his conservatism, recognition of the Church's cultural importance in history and critical views on the Hussite revolution, Pekař was completely rejected by the post-war political establishment, and consequently re-assessed as a source of alternative historical thinking by some dissident intellectuals of the 1980s. Immediately after the changes of 1989, some of his books and studies were republished and he has since been recognized as one of the greatest Czech historians.

Main works: *Dějiny Valdštejnského spiknutí 1630–1634* [The history of the Wallenstein conspiracy] (1895); *Nejstarší kronika česká* [The oldest Czech chronicle] (1903); *Kniha o Kostí*, 2 vols. [A book about Kost] (1909, 1911); *Masarykova česká filosofie* [Masaryk's Czech philosophy] (1912); *František Palacký* (1912); *České katastry 1654–1789* [Czech cadastres, 1654–1789] (1913–1915) *Bílá Hora, její příčiny a následky* [The White Mountain, its causes and consequences] (1921); *Dějiny československé* [Czechoslovak history] (1921); *Tři kapitoly z boje o sv. Jana Nepomuckého* [Three chapters from the struggle over St. John Nepomucene] (1921); *Žižka a jeho doba*, 4 vols. [Žižka and his time] (1927–1933); *Smysl českých dějin* [The meaning of Czech history] (1929); *Valdštejn* [Wallenstein] (1933).

Context

On account of growing social and political tensions in various parts of the Habsburg Monarchy at the end of the nineteenth century, the upcoming generation of Czech political activists felt the need to reformulate the foundations of Czech politics. This had been clearly expressed in *Česká otázka* by **Tomáš G. Masaryk** and some of his other books from 1895–96, all of which provoked lively debate. At first the reactions came from political quarters. The most important was that of Josef Kaizl, Masaryk's former colleague in the Young Czech Party. In a short book, *České myšlenky* (Czech thoughts) from 1896, Kaizl, in contrast to Masaryk, argued that it was the national idea rather than a religious one that was the formative element of Czech historical development. The major figures of the national awakening of the early nineteenth century were enlighteners and liberals in the tradition of the French Enlightenment and not followers of the Reformation. The debate between Masaryk and Kaizl was a prelude to the whole 'dispute over the meaning of Czech history' that reflected the rapid modernization of Czech society in the first third of the twentieth century. The most important positions in this debate were reflected in the works of Tomáš G. Masaryk on the one hand, and Josef Pekař on the other.

At first, there was no immediate reaction on the part of the mainstream Czech historians at the time of Masaryk's book. Jaroslav Goll, the leader of the 'positivist' school and Masaryk's colleague, shared with him the 'realist' political stance while rejecting the validity of Masaryk's claim that one particular factor or idea (such as the idea of *Humanität*) could exercise a decisive influence over several historical eras. It was only in 1912, after attacks by some of Masaryk's followers against the 'school of Goll,' that Josef Pekař, the most prominent member of the school, decided to reply 17 years after the publication of Masaryk's 'Czech Question.' In an article entitled

Masarykova česká filosofie, Pekař profoundly disagrees with Masaryk that the religious concept precedes national consciousness. He sees Masaryk as a philosophical thinker who introduced unacceptable mythical and teleological concepts into history. Exactly at the moment when modern historiography was born, Pekař writes, the teleological approach applied by Masaryk had been abandoned for good.

The dispute continued in the subsequent years, preoccupying historians through the emergence of Czechoslovakia in late 1918, in which democratic culture and the quest for legitimacy fuelled cultural and ideological differentiation. Generally supporting Czechoslovak democracy as a legitimate expression of Czech statehood, Pekař still criticized many of its features from a conservative historicist position. In his lecture *Smysl českých dějin*, from 1928, he develops his concept of a "national axis of Czech history" that was dominated by the steady influence of West European culture mediated above all by Germans. According to Pekař, this was not a dialectical process of mutual enrichment between the German and Slavic elements, as Palacký insisted, but much more a process of receiving, imitating, and yielding to Western models and patterns. The unifying principle of Czech history was not a universal "ideal of humanity" but a "national consciousness." Although this consciousness had changed over the course of time, there were some stable elements—namely, the geographical position of the Czech nation surrounded by Germans, as well as the particularly Czech historical traditions (the bearers of continuity), which gave Czech history its unique character. Against Palacký's and Masaryk's 'Protestant-humanistic' interpretation of Czech history, Pekař offered an alternative historical narrative based on the sense of national belonging. In his books and articles he stresses the medieval character of the Hussite movement, appreciates the Roman Catholic traditions of St. Wenceslas (a patron saint of Bohemia) and St. John Nepomucene (a symbol of the re-Catholicization of the Bohemian Lands), and offers an alternative and, in the end, a more positive interpretation of Baroque culture and, in general, of Habsburg rule in the Bohemian Lands after 1526.

'The Meaning of Czech History' was the subject of lively discussions throughout the whole inter-war period, in which a number of prominent intellectuals, in addition to Masaryk and Pekař, were involved. Despite the basic geopolitical shift in the area and the changed political perspectives after the Second World War, intellectual impulses provided by the dispute were still tangible and relevant to the key political debates during the 1968 Prague Spring and even more to the subsequent dissidents' movement. With the democratic changes beginning in late 1989, the ideas of both Masaryk and

Pekař could not serve as direct points of reference for current political discussions. Nevertheless, they are understood as genuine and historically relevant configurations of modern Czech political and historical thought.

MK

The meaning of Czech history

My book does not understand Czech history as a work essentially of autonomous Czech development. Instead, it demonstrates that the nature of this development is determined mainly by the influences, model, efforts and spirit of Western Europe. The idea that Czech history is a component, part, or expression of European life or a variation on it, seems today perhaps to be an everyday, ordinary truth—indeed, the idea grew and became stronger from the knowledge that it was necessary to fight against the ideas of Palacký and his day. [...] In the views held in the last century, known also from Palacký's conception of our history, the Czech, as Slavs, were from the very beginning of their history bearers of a high culture, yes, a culture higher than that of their Germanic neighbors to the West. To Palacký, as is known, our history clearly seemed to be essentially a struggle, the contact and conflict of two worlds, the world of freedom, good and peace, that is to say, the world of democracy on the Slavic side and the world of dominion, force, oppression, that is to say, the world of feudalism on the Germanic side: to him, the White Mountain was an expression of the ultimate defeat of original, early Czech culture.[...] The point of view of today's generation of historians on this question is fundamentally different: we do not believe in any original high culture of the ancient Slavs (what was here in the beginning of our history was given by the Goths and, in particular, Byzantium) and we place the emphasis on the fact that perhaps everything we include under the term 'culture' was brought into Bohemia at the beginning of its existence as a state from the outside world. [...] But the model of foreign lands affected, I repeat, all aspects of life and all its manifestations, creating—depending on its cultural period—ever new situations and forms, from the farmer's implements to the ideas of the religious reformer and political leader and even the visions of the poet. In other words, it is not only contact and conflict (Palacký's formula) but also a continuous receiving, submitting and being saturated with a model of life and with ideas of our more forward-looking neighbors in the Germanic and Romance world, which constitute the most powerful and by far the most important facts and factors of our history. [...]

I touched upon the idea that in our homeland, this work of Europe had by nature different *periods*. This idea contains my view of historical development. [...] In my book I cover these phases with the periods known in art history: the Romanesque, the Gothic (from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century), the Renaissance and the Baroque. The period of Enlightenment and revolution, which I trace in my book, I would now, seen as a whole, call the Classical and Romantic period; only the last period, the 'period of Francis Joseph,' lacks an adequate name which, in a single word, would convey the spiritual character ascribed to it by a periodization based on an alternation of both artistic and spiritual styles. (That fact is, by the way, itself testimony to the spiritually disunited and unoriginal character of the period we are discussing.) The spiritual essence of the period is surely to be seen in art, which is, precisely because of its non-intellectual nature, the most visible; the idea to use the terms, for example, Gothic or Renaissance to name the character of a whole period is, of course, old, and I am not the first to use it for the periodization of the past. [...]

With this conception and its perspective of periodization we are absolutely, however, moving away from Palacký, in whose conception, even though it is not clearly expressed, the Czech nation has, from its beginning to the seventeenth century, been the bearer of one and the same program—the idea of democracy –, whose periodization revolves round the years 1403 and 1618, or perhaps 1627.¹ In my understanding of development, the aims change and the meaning of Czech national cultural endeavors change according to the ideals that were introduced into Czech life by the spiritual landmarks of the individual European periods. Not only public and private life assumes other forms and natures depending on the extent of their influence; the spiritual orientation of the individual and the nation also changes according to them. The Czech of the fourteenth or fifteenth century has a different "mentality" than the Czech of the sixteenth and seventeenth century or of the nineteenth or twentieth. [...]

As in any scheme that oversimplifies the complexity of life, this conception, too, certainly has its shortcomings and is certainly not sufficient alone and at all times; it is permeated and mixed with other contexts, some of which we have perhaps not yet perceived. But its basic idea, namely, that *the*

¹ By 1403, Pekař is denoting the beginning of Jan Hus' preaching in the Bethlehem Chapel, Prague. 1618 stands for the beginning of the Bohemian Estates' revolt against Ferdinand II Habsburg that became the first phase of the Thirty Years' War. 1627 marks the introduction of the absolutist royal power (the so-called *Obnovené zřízení zemské*) into defeated Bohemia and Moravia.

autonomy of Czech development is limited essentially by the spiritual influence and commands of Europe and that *this influence changed its "meaning," its nature, through the centuries*, counters, I believe, all objections. The decisive influence of Europe in contexts and interpreted modalities is, I would conclude, the main and by far the most important factor in our history, and the main author of our fate. [...]

A second factor of immense, history-making consequence is our geographical position among nations, particularly *our position among the Germans*. It has had an influence in several senses; we shall touch upon the most important of these. Mainly it was the Germans, through whom and in whose garb various kinds of progress, models and spiritual guidelines of Europe came to our country. [...] From the beginning of our history we were also dependent on German power politically—although the skill (including military skill) of our tribe, the protected position of the country and the good policy of our rulers managed to defeat the danger of this dependency and finally to give the Czech state a leading, privileged position in the Empire, to put the power of the [Holy] Roman emperors into the hands of Czech kings. But none of this could have happened without the considerable Germanization of the royal family and society at the court, and by accepting the fact that our lands became *de facto* lands settled by two nations, the Czech and the German, that we were threatened with the same fate as Silesia or as the Polabian Slavs: the loss of their homeland and, what's more, of their own existence. [...] In our history, the effect of this threat to our very nationality, how it made and fostered Czech nationalism with a zeal and force that are unparalleled by any other nation, are sufficiently well-known facts. An anxiety about the threatened heritage of our forebears and the attempt to regain the half-lost primacy on our own soil were undercurrents of the Hussite revolution, and these essentially changed the country in terms of nationality, just as in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Romanticism fostered the idea of national revival to struggle against the second and third wave of alien German manners. [...]

But it must be said, if we are talking about the German influence as a factor in Czech history, that this influence did not mean only an education in anti-German nationalism, nor did it cause only Czech–Polish friendship in the fifteenth century, or the Slavic idea and hope in Russia, our great uncle to the East, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. This influence as analyzed here, which introduces Europe to us, has done much that is great and blessed in our country. It is adapting our country—in cooperation, I repeat, with the direct influence of the rest of Western Europe—to higher

forms of life in spiritual and material culture, in legal and social relations and in the economy. An enumeration of what the Germans have done on our soil, of what they have taught us, would be very long; the building of towns and civil administration, resulting in the cultural and material boom of the late Middle Ages (recall the silver mines) and an increase in the wealth of the country, for example, was in essence their work, as was the building of big industry in the nineteenth century in the poorest regions, which the Czechs had not cared about from the beginning and where German colonists managed to make a living out of the worst soil. And the education in nationalism we have been talking about need not be understood only in the sense that the Germans made us into enemies of the Germans, but also in the sense that they forced us to imitate them, compete with them and attempt to become equal to their progress, know-how, wealth and power—and in that sense, our fateful position between the Germans had a very beneficial influence on us; if we are further than other East European nations in economic and industrial ability, administration, discipline, and hard work, we can thank mainly German upbringing. Even more important than this, it must be said, is that over the centuries, we mixed many times with the Germans, took much German blood into our veins, changed our nature, even racially. If a quarter of the Czechs in Bohemia today have German names, that is a record not of Germanization but of Czechicization, evidence of how much perhaps the Germans had their nationality taken from them in this historic Czecho-German arena. That fact, too, has of course had an immense effect on the extent of our power of resistance to the Germans and on our attempts to become their equals—the Germans have partly become Czechicized linguistically, we have become Germanized in personality traits and abilities [...]

Last, but not least in the whole series of factors that form our history is, ultimately, *our history itself*. I will touch upon a topic here, which would in itself take up a whole lecture. Suffice it to say, for example, that were it not for Hussitism, we would not have fallen to Protestantism in the sixteenth century, and would not thus, in spite one of the basic facts of our history, have, by our own choice, become one of the fellow-travelers of the ethnically-German world. Were it not for the centuries of our independence as a state, we would not have freed ourselves out of Austrian captivity in the World War. The idea of historical state rights was a sturdy pillar of our so-called awakening and, in the half-century before the World War, the main source of the anti-Austrian determination that armed our Legion. [...]

The fact that it was love, anxiety, zeal or national interest—or an interest that was considered national—which suddenly exerted a powerful influence

on the interpretation of history and consequently on education and the spirit of whole generations and, indirectly, then, on the content and direction of historical development, returns our thoughts back to the question of what role national awareness, the national idea, played, and what position it holds, in our history. [...] And if we recapitulate everything that was said about the changing spiritual nature and orientation, about the changing aims and ideals of the Czech man on the journey of generations through the dissimilar cultural landscapes through which he has been passing for centuries, we cannot but emphasize the fact that only one bond connects these mutually dissimilar intellectual worlds and represents an unbroken continuity of life and will over the centuries—namely, *national consciousness*. It is only where we hear its voice of hope, fear, prayer or anger from the distances of the past, that we understand and sense all the sons of the national family and that we are spiritually united with the generations of our forebears long dead. Only there do we realize fully and without difference that we are part of a spiritual collective which lives and wanders from the centuries of the past to the centuries of the future with the same basic aim—namely, to preserve, strengthen and ennoble its own individuality among nations. [...] Only the consciousness that we are members of the same tribe, of the same national family, which has for centuries been bound not only by language and soil, by a physical homeland, but also by a homeland of historical tradition, by a bond of shared fates, the awareness that it is up to each generation to solve—under conditions that have changed yet are in essence the same—problems, which assigned to our forebears the concern for the preservation of its own existence, is the unchangeable basis that permeates our history and in fact carries it. Can one therefore say that the national idea is the meaning of our history? I would reply that it is, or that, in fact, the national idea is even more: the national idea is the precondition of the meaning of our history, it is its *reason*, the blood pulsating through its beating heart. We surely could not talk about the meaning of Czech history if it were not *Czech* history.

Translated by Derek Paton

JOVAN SKERLIĆ: THE NEW YOUTH MAGAZINES AND OUR NEW GENERATION

Title: *Novi omladinski listovi i naš novi naraštaj* (The new youth magazines and our new generation)

Originally published: *Srpski književni glasnik*, 1913, XXX/3, pp. 212–224.

Language: Serbian

The excerpts used are from Jovan Skerlić, *Pisci i knjige*, vol. V (Belgrade: Prosveta, 1964), pp. 263–277.

About the author

Jovan Skerlić [1877, Belgrade – 1914, Belgrade]: literary critic, historian of literature. He was born into a middle-class family with origins in Šumadija and Vojvodina. While attending the gymnasium in Belgrade, he was introduced to the socialist ideas of **Svetozar Marković**. In 1895, Skerlić began to work for various socialist and opposition newspapers, such as *Socijaldemokrat* (Social democrat), *Radničke novine* (Workers' news), and *Delo* (Work). At Belgrade University, he studied history and French philology. There he met professor Bogdan Popović, who would have a strong impact on his personality. After graduating from Belgrade University, Skerlić continued his studies in Lausanne, Paris and Munich, becoming a specialist in French language and literature, and in literary theory. In 1905, he was appointed as a professor at Belgrade University and became the editor of the respectable literary magazine *Srpski književni glasnik* (Serbian literary messenger). As a critic, he stood for the importance of the content of the literary text, and less for its expressive and artistic form. The method of his analysis involved the reconstruction of the social, cultural and political circumstances that formed the background and context of literary creativity. Skerlić became famous for his style of writing, which was clear, picturesque, and concise. At the beginning of the twentieth century, he became a member of the Independent Radical Party (a group which had broken off from the Radical Party; see **Pera Todorović**, *Speech at the Assembly of the People's Radical Party in Kragujevac*). As such, he was one of the ideologists of *Jugoslavenska nacionalna omladina* (Yugoslav national youth), and advocated a common Serbo-Croatian language and national unity. Skerlić is considered to be one of the most prominent names of Serbian modernism, and remains a key reference point within the field of literary criticism.

Main works: *Pogled na današnju francusku književnost* [A view of contemporary French literature] (1902); *Jakov Ignjatović* (1904); *Omladina i njena književnost* [The 'Youth' movement and its literature] (1906); *Srpska književnost u 18. veku*

[Serbian literature in the eighteenth century] (1909); *Svetozar Marković* (1910); *Istorijski pregled srpske štampe* [Historical overview of the Serbian press] (1911); *Istorija nove srpske književnosti* [History of new Serbian literature] (1912, 1914); *Pisci i knjige* 9 vols. [Writers and books] (1907–1926).

Context

The text in question, concerning the new youth magazines and the patriotism of the new generation, was published in 1913, simultaneously in Serbia and Croatia. It was written in the period when Serbia was engaged in the Balkan Wars, thus a substantial part of it was dedicated to the rise of patriotic feelings among the younger generation. Skerlić compared the attitudes and feelings of youth in the first decades of the twentieth century to the Romantic ‘Serbian Youth’ movement, which he had already examined and criticized extensively. The critique of the cultural and political conditions of the period between the 1840s and the 1860s in Serbia had already been the subject of Skerlić’s *Omladina i njena književnost*, which was a part of Skerlić’s long-lasting investigation of the literary and political history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Serbia.

Omladina i njena književnost particularly examines the dynamics of literary and political life at the late 1860s and early 1870s. According to Skerlić, the period marked the heyday of Serbian Romanticism, with a strong and long-lasting resonance in Serbian politics and literature that he sought to challenge. At the end of the 1860s, through the activities of the United Serbian Youth (see **Draga Dejanović**, *To Serbian mothers*), the idealization of national cultural traits had gained popularity. The representatives of this National Romantic movement worshipped everything that could be connected to village life, peasant culture, folk customs, “ancient traditions” and folk heroes. The ‘Youth’ generated a large stock of representations, ideas, literary and political texts, which consolidated “the new cult of nationality.” Skerlić was critical of these mythical political ideas and identified himself with the enlightened, rational, and realistic traditions in Serbian literature, epitomized by **Dositej Obradović** and **Svetozar Marković**.

In many, if not most of his writings, Skerlić reiterates his criticism of the Romantic mythologies of the 1860s, arguing in a modernist vein for individualism, which he regarded a fundamental value. Skerlić’s analysis of literary and political circumstances during the “age of the Youth” betrays his faith in reason, science and progress. Deeming reason and culture to be universal values, he argued against the Romantic idea of a unique “Serbian na-

tional culture" which had never been precisely defined. Skerlić criticized "the myths of the Youth," not just because he believed they were unreasonable, but also from a different standpoint. He believed in a new, powerful, informed and modern patriotism, while arguing that the Romantic cults limited the national energy and restrained the development of the nation. According to Ivan Čolović, Skerlić deconstructed romanticist myths, while simultaneously regenerating them with new and more solid foundations—an achievement that makes him a genuine representative of modernism in Serbia. His modernist position can also be described as an effort to combine progress and reason with the subjectivity of identity, reconciling aspects that are always related to one another in an ambiguous fashion.

IE

The new youth magazines and our new generation

An extremely interesting and important enquiry has been underway recently in France on the spiritual and mental state of the minds of the younger generation. On the basis of this, a prognosis has been made for the near future of France from a national and social point of view. Thus, the eminent fighter against the "New Sorbonne," who hides behind the pseudonym Agathon, has created the work *Jeunes gens d'aujourd'hui* (The youth of today)¹ and Emile Henriot² has written: *A quoi rêvent les jeunes gens* (What young people dream about). A young French writer Gaston Riou³ has written the book *Aux écoutes de la France qui vient* (Listening for the France to come) in which he endeavored to expound upon the way the younger French generation feels and what France can hope from them. He demonstrated that pessimism, skepticism and boredom, which are "social facts, class feelings," all those characteristics of previous generations, were disappearing and that the younger generation of the time was "free from incertitude," that it had a healthy love of life, the energy to fight, readiness for action and a deep-seated and fruitful national sense.

Those same characteristics can be clearly seen in our younger generation, amongst "Serbia to Come." Our younger generation too has, first and foremost, faith in life and hope for a better future. Circumstances in the country have changed in recent years, without doubt for the better; events have gone

¹ The authors were Henri Massis and Alfred de Tarde.

² Émile Henriot (1889–1961): French poet, writer, and literary critic.

³ Edmond Gaston Riou (1883–1958): French writer and politician active during the Third Republic.

ahead and people have followed them. Today, Serbia does not look like the dark and hopeless *Stradija*⁴ as it seemed to Radoje Domanović⁵ ten years ago, at the time when Božidar Knežević⁶ was writing his doleful *Misli* (Thoughts). Who today would wish for a “good, dark, tomb and eternal peace,” who would today sing of graves, De Profundis, Finale, Miserere, Nirvana, “odes to death,” “ashes of the heart,” “the nightmare of life,” “the land of dead requiems,” the “stench of old, rotten putrefaction”? Who today is writing books backed in funereal black and with tears of blood? All those costumes and decorations have been dispatched to the museum of literary antiquities, together with the “sublime maidens,” “pale moons” and “tender shepherdesses” of old Romantic poetry. It is evident that the wind of life is blowing strongly over our lands. Heads are held high and backs are straight. Instead of the “static” of the still recent mournful, anemic and bowed age, as Mitrinović⁷ would say, there is a gust of the “dynamic” of life today, a new spirit of faith in life, love of work and creation and of national energy. This is the new spirit that was inspired by Ivan Meštrović⁸ when he created in stone the epic poem of Kosovo and incarnated in Kraljević Marko⁹ the inexhaustible spiritual and physical strength of our nation, a nation that has descended alive from its own Golgotha and has not yet had its last say in the world. It is that same new spirit that is reflected in the tellingly optimistic orations of Nikolaj Velimirović,¹⁰ in Milan Rakić’s Kosovo cycle,¹¹ in Aleksa Šantić’s

⁴ *Stradija*—‘Land of tribulation.’

⁵ Radoje Domanović (1873–1908): Serbian writer and teacher, most famous for his satirical short stories.

⁶ Božidar Knežević (1862–1905): philosopher and writer.

⁷ This refers to Dimitrije Mitrinović (1887–1953), who was a philosopher and poet, theoretician of modern painting.

⁸ Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962): famous Croatian sculptor. One of the works he has planned, but never realized, was a set of statues for a Yugoslav national temple that would be erected in Kosovo to commemorate the battle that took place there in 1389.

⁹ Marko Kraljević was one of the heroes in Serbian epic poetry, characterized by great strength and endurance.

¹⁰ Nikolaj Velimirović (1880–1956): Serbian archbishop, whose controversial biography still provokes debates in intellectual circles. Within the liberal intellectual and public scene, his writings are considered to have antisemitic implications (and in turn to inspire today’s right-wing attitudes and sentiments), while the nationalist politicians and public figures praise him for his original spiritual achievements. The Serbian Orthodox Church has elevated him into sainthood, something which has provoked further public debate.

¹¹ Milan Rakić (1876–1938): famous Serbian poet, known for several poems dedicated to the Battle of Kosovo, which have further solidified the cult of the Ser-

patriotic poetry, in the *Rodoljubive pesme* (Patriotic poems) of Veljko Petrović¹² and in Mirko Korolija's national songs. It is the same spirit of strength and enthusiasm that emerged like a stroke of lightning in the great autumn of 1912 at the battlefields on the Pčinja, Ibar and Vardar and which brought the Serbo-Croatian nation days the likes of which have not been seen since the fourteenth century.

Moreover, the younger generation is, in its best and most active works, deeply national, with a cult of national energy and action. And there is nothing more natural and nothing more necessary today than that faith in oneself and the determination to sustain that right with one's own strength. We are living in an age of cultural decline, of the revival of the hated "right of the fist," when humanistic ideals, rights and justice are being trampled upon and when a barbarian cry is heard in the merciless stamping upon the small and the weak: woe be it to the small and the gravely defeated. Brute force alone can be heard and, where the right of small nations to life is concerned, the offices of the Great Powers speak in a language from the age when the Teutonic knights exterminated Baltic Slav tribes "with sword and fire." Mankind is entering into one of those mindless maelstroms when state borders and the future of nations are being changed amid rivers of blood. The present day all too closely resembles the blood-soaked periods of the first years of the nineteenth century and the period between 1848 and 1871. The world has seen four great wars in ten years, and everyone can sense a storm in the air. Five-century-old empires are crumbling like worm-ridden trees, and no single nation can be sure of its future. And who, in these grievous and dangerous times, could dream, together with the noble idealists from the first half of the nineteenth century, that mankind has come of age and that the age of universal peace, an age of international justice and human brotherhood, has come! Who today could claim, together with Heine, that democracy is the great homeland, and that there are no homelands other than parties and classes? Who dares repeat the words of Lamartine's magnificent Marseillaise of Peace?

I am a fellow-citizen of each soul that thinks.

The truth, that is my homeland!

Our prospects are dark, narrow and low today; all reasonable men can clearly see that we must first endure and live as a nation and, in expectation

bian martyrs, and the importance of the Kosovo myth and its legendary fame for Serbian national identity.

¹² Veljko Petrović (1884–1967): one of the most important Serbian modernist poets working in the interwar period.

of more humane and more just times, we must, speaking in the language of the people, first save our own skins. And young people can see this clearly, and they have placed nationalism in the first place. But there are different kinds of nationalism. The nationalism of the younger generation should not be taken in the narrow sense of a political direction, or in the sense of that romantic, anti-Western, but more verbal nationalism of half a century ago. The new nationalism is of a higher order and with broader perspectives; it is, in fact, the vital force of a race capable of life, the self-defense of a powerful national organism, the manifestation of the inalienable right of one nation to live its own life and to be the master of its own destiny, the elevated sense of solidarity that unites all generations and all parts of one nation into one harmonious entity. This is not that old, traditionalist and fatalist nationalism that fed itself on dreams of the past, placed all its hope on a European cataclysm that never happened and believed that salvation would come from meetings of emperors and congresses of diplomats. The new nationalism means faith in oneself, reliance on one's own forces, "dismissal of all servitude" both in oneself and around oneself and a reliance on the old and eternal truth that "in matters of freedom one only has what one has taken." This nationalism of self-sufficiency, individuality and general endeavor could have as its slogan the words of old Lukijan Mušicki¹³: "*Woe unto me without me!*" And it is an important fact that the younger generation is paying such attention to its physical and spiritual education, the Sokol society spirit and sobriety (which is a gymnastic exercise of the will). The new nationalism is rational, realistic and democratic. Its first sources lie in the gentle and noble Dositej Obradović, "the founder of our consciousness" according to *Novi Serbin*¹⁴; it is not a matter of imagination but of awareness and reason, not of lamenting the past and wishing for some dreams of the future, but of what can be and has purpose in being, not of lack of culture and ignorant hatred of the "rotten West," but a conscious ambition that the Serbo-Croatian nation can lift itself to the heights of the developed Western nations and enter into the great community of modern civilization as a free and equal member. In its realism, the new nationalism is democratic and social, not out of love of eloquent words and fine phrases, but because it relies on the broad national mass of the people, who are the source of the nation's strength, and because it considers the full, material, intellectual and moral raising of those foundations and pillars of the

¹³ Lukijan Mušicki (1777–1837): bishop of the Serbian Orthodox Church, prose writer and poet.

¹⁴ *Novi Serbin*—a socialist journal published prior to the First World War, edited by Vasa Stajić.

nation as its natural goal. The younger generations are showing a merrier visage, a healthier soul and a stronger will. Young men are firmer and more masculine; they are men of determination and action. They do not stand around weeping beside the river of life but throw themselves into its strongest current. They are the sowers and the reapers of a great harvest.

Translated by Linda Krstajić, Krištof Bodrič and Vedran Dronjić

GIORGOS THEOTOKAS: FREE SPIRIT

Title: *Ελεύθερο Πνεῦμα* (Free spirit)

Originally Published: Ἀθήνα, Ἐκδότης Α.Ι. Πάλλης, 1929

Language: Greek

The excerpts used are from the annotated edition by Konstantinos Th. Dimaras, (Athens: Ερμής, 1973), pp. 10, 61–64.

About the author

Giorgos Theotokas, known also by the penname **Orestis Digenis** [1905, Istanbul – 1966, Athens]: novelist and critic. He completed his secondary education in a French lyceum in Istanbul. He wrote his first essays on literature during his high school years. In 1922, he moved to Athens to study law. In 1925–1926, during his years as a student, he was involved in political activities through the association *Φοιτητική Συντροφιά* (Students' company). It is the experience of this period that he would later describe in his most well known novel *Ἀργώ* published in two volumes in 1933–36. During 1927–1929, he resumed his studies in Paris and in London. His contact with European culture and especially French intellectuals played a significant role in the formation of his personality and his attitude towards Greek society. In 1929, he returned to Athens and wrote 'Free Spirit,' which was immediately received as the manifesto of the new generation. 'Argo' constituted a vivid picture of the existential impasse of contemporary bourgeois society. Together, with 'Leonis,' which described the writer's childhood and youth in Istanbul (published in 1940), they are considered as being among the most typical examples of the new bourgeois novel. Theotokas rejected any fanaticism and dogmatic attitude. Faith in a kind of freedom that is not sacrificed to temporary political party exigencies but remains unbiased constitutes the basis of his intellectual work. Apart from this, his contribution to the consolidation of the art of novel writing in Greek intellectual life was significant.

Main works: *Ελεύθερο Πνεῦμα* [Free spirit] (1929); *Ἀργώ*, 2 vols. [Argo] (1933, 1936); *Τό δαιμόνιο* [Demonic spirit] (1938); *Λεωνής* [Leonis] (1940); *Ἱερὰ Οδός* [Holy road] (1950); *Ἀσθενεῖς καὶ Ὀδοιπόροι* [People in need and travelers] (1964).

Context

The Lausanne Treaty of 1923 marked the final stage of the protracted dispute between Greece and Turkey. However, the subsequent exchange of populations brought 1,200,000 Greek-Orthodox refugees from Turkey into a

country of 5,000,000 inhabitants, while 500,000 Muslims went in the opposite direction. The refugees went through enormous suffering, and many died during the initial stages of the process. Moreover, they had to deal with the hostility of indigenous populations, who felt that Greece suffered humiliation due to the very same people, and also because they did not wish to share their already difficult lives with them. The refugees were settled in areas detached from city networks. Thus, they lived in a state of isolation for decades. It was to a large extent within these regions that during the Second World War, the *Εθνικό Απελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο EAM* (National Liberation Front) managed to recruit many of its members. Actually, the incapacity of Greek society to incorporate the newcomers was held as one of the reasons for the civil war (1944–1949) (see **George Seferis**, *A Greek—Makriyannis*). In fact, during the inter-war period, all the accumulated tensions and grievances brought political life to a standstill. Despite the fact that in 1924, the Republic was proclaimed and the Monarchy, blamed for all misfortunes, was ousted, democracy did not take roots. A series of military coups that frequently upset political life eventually culminated in the **Ioannis Metaxas** dictatorship and the restoration of the monarchy.

When Theotokas went from Istanbul to Athens for studying, the atmosphere was one of defeat and despair. In intellectual terms, the poet Costis Palamas (1859–1943), a dominant literary figure of the previous period who had connected his poetry with nationalist aspirations, was now being seriously challenged. Palamas had expressed the modernist version of the 'Great Idea,' the irredentist vision of annexing to the Hellenic Kingdom all Ottoman territories inhabited by Greek Orthodox population. Along the same line, as it has been suggested, the new interest in Orthodoxy observed during this period was not a return to tradition but a search for another way to escape from it. This applies also to Constantine P. Cavafy (1863–1933), the poet from Alexandria, who gained the sympathies of Athenian intellectual circles as someone representing a different, strange and exotic world. In 1929, a young intellectual who did not want to turn back to **Dionysios Solomos** or to the demotic songs could find nothing solid to rely on. Kostas Kariotakis, famous for his pessimistic poetry, had committed suicide in 1928. On the other hand, the ideological debates on the Russian Revolution intensified. In 1928, in a theater crowded with people, Nikos Kazantzakis (1883–1957), who was later to become the most famous Greek novelist worldwide, gave a lecture praising the Soviet reality together with his close friend Romanian writer Panait Istrati (1884–1935). In the same year, Kazantzakis published his book *Τί είδα στη Ρωσία* (What I saw in Russia).

Fervent debates among young intellectuals took place within this atmosphere. The two major sides of the debate were those represented by the 'idealists' and the communists. There was, of course, a variety of choices between these two positions. However, the debate soon became extremely polarized. Reviews such as *Ίδέα* (Idea), published by Giorgos Theotokas and Angelos Terzakis (1907–1979), the other important novelist of the same generation, can be described as an expression of a liberal bourgeois ideology that aimed to fight against communism.

Among these young intellectuals, novelists and poets, the most prominent were the poets George Seferis and Odysseas Elytis (1911–1996), both of whom won the Nobel prize for literature (in 1963 and 1979 respectively). This generation managed to overcome the feeling of defeat and isolation, and elaborated on the notion of *Ελληνικότητα* (Hellenicity), which was aimed to replace the pre-First World War concept of the 'Great Idea.' Moreover, they expressed their dismay for a society still bound to the past, relying on traditions and austere family structures, unable to liberate itself, both in its mores and intellectual tendencies, and catch up with the rest of Europe. Most of these works are dominated by a critique of traditional values. In terms of literary genres, the young generation shifted from ethnographical narration to the urban and historical novel, and from symbolism and parnassism (the French poetic school of the latter half of the 19th century, characterized chiefly by a belief in art for art's sake) to modernist poetry. Moreover, a particular group of poets largely influenced by French surrealism and Italian futurism, figures such as Andreas Empirikos (1901–1975), Nikos Engonopoulos (1907–1985) and Nicolas Calas (1907–1988), moved to more revolutionary forms based on the premises of the contemporary avant-garde. It is within this atmosphere that the 'Free Spirit' appeared. The text consists of four essays with the titles 'A walk through Europe,' 'National character and intellectual militarism,' 'Ethnography,' and 'Preconditions for a true avant-garde.'

In the fourth essay, Theotokas describes the reasons which brought about the stagnation of contemporary Greek society. The most significant feature is considered to be the provincial character of Neo-Hellenic culture. There was no internal production which could justify a place for Greece in European civilization. A major reason for this was the catastrophe of 1922. Many important individuals were lost in this turmoil, and those who survived were accustomed to fighting over the 'Language question,' and were left in despair in a world they did not understand. After the defeat of 1922, nobody believed in the virtue of the "hellenic race" (*romeiko*). Yet, the author concluded,

there were many young people with a strong will for change inspired by the noble "idea" for a "new Greece."

The intellectual circles of the time received the 'Free spirit' in an ambivalent way. Established authors such as Grigorios Xenopoulos (1867–1951), a major novelist of the first decades of the century and editor of the prominent review *Néa Eστία* (New hearth), commented that "this was not only a bad and useless book, but also a mean act." Others, however, such as the critic Spyros Melas (1882–1966), considered the book to "stand against the stagnant ways of thought and the art within which the pre-war generation was stuck."

The book has frequently been called a manifesto. Literary critics have recently doubted the role of the 'Free Spirit' as the manifesto of the generation of the 1930s. However, Theotokas, along with Seferis, has been placed at the center of the debate on *Hellenocentrism*, that is, the persistence on the specificity of the Hellenic nation. It is evident, though, that neither Theotokas nor Seferis could be accused of trying to dissociate Greece from European developments. Later on, as the political atmosphere in the 1930s and the 1940s became gradually more polarized, both Theotokas and Seferis sided with the conservative royalist establishment, never trying to disconnect themselves from their own bourgeois background. Thus, the manifesto of 1929 should be treated within its own context, separated from the later predilections of its author.

VK

Free spirit

[...] But this linking together, if it is indeed taking place, makes us melancholic. Amidst the creative ferment in present-day Europe, what place does Greece hold? What is our contribution to the great efforts being made all around us? Nothing! We feel it deeply as soon as we cross our borders: we represent nothing, no one takes us seriously, we cannot justify the place we hold in Europe and, in the eyes of foreigners, we are only money-brokers, boatmen, small-time grocers and nothing more. After we have wandered around enough amidst European civilization, we return home one day, our hearts heavy. Where, then, are the Greeks? We looked for them everywhere but they were nowhere to be found. [...]

It seems that Greece is at sea. The shock of the war was so deep in our land, deeper than anywhere else, the development of the interwar years so unexpected, incoherent and sweeping, that we crossed our arms and stand gazing at the sight without daring to talk about it.

We were a small and narrow-minded provincial society that kept to itself. Greece's only concern before the war was the language question. The intellectual nourishment of public opinion were the current events columns in the newspapers. Suddenly, from one day to the next, we found ourselves in this jumble of modern life, swept along by the great winds of post-war Europe. Our teachers, carefree people who had dedicated their life to the study of ancient grammar, Roman law, Byzantine history and the Greek folk song, were suddenly faced with the mad speed of our century, the rapid development of society's mores, our radical political and economic upheavals, the struggle of the classes, jazz and all the world of passions which it expresses, the concerns of the post-war generation, modern girls with their hair cut short, with their skirts above their knees, with their suntanned skin, emancipated all at once from centuries old social conventions. These good people understand nothing and say that the world is going to wreck and ruin. It would be strange if they understood. Greek letters felt frightened and fell silent. The little amount of thought that existed quit the battle. When we observe things up close, the standstill of our intellectual life seems natural to us. Greece's leap had been very wide and the Greek spirit, still weak, was unable to follow the development of the country.

When we say that over the past twenty years we have lacked young creators, we must not forget the conditions of that time. The youth of the years 1910–1920, who, at the beginning of their career, displayed both thinking and talent, are a sacrificed generation. Their most precious resources were spent on the battlefields. Perhaps the finest among them, the ones who today would be our intellectual leaders, fell in Macedonia and Asia Minor before they had time to show their worth. Among the many thousands of dead, surely there were superior spirits. And those who did not go to the front were absorbed by the ten-year-long anguish of the war and the distress of the civil conflicts. There was no time for them to concentrate, to think, to compose themselves. Besides, the sudden and radical change in living conditions may have destroyed many values, for material reasons of course, but also for psychological ones. Such general changes in the pace of a society can only be suffered cool-headedly by very strong idiosyncrasies. A delicate talent, born to express calm emotions within a calm atmosphere, is easily driven to despair when such tempests break out. What is certain is that once the war was over, while the whole of Europe was revising its spiritual values, we were revising nothing, for we were lacking in strength. We left everything as it was and entered the twentieth century with our eyes closed.

The moral effect of our defeat was and still is most powerful in our land. Everywhere else, the first post-war decade was a period of ferment and great endeavors. In Greece it was a period of despair. Our elders sank in the harbor of Smyrna not only their forces, but also their ideals and their self-confidence. In 1922 they ceased to believe in Greece. From then until now our land has lived without brave and noble feelings, without the need to surpass itself, without any exaltation. The disaster smothered any breath of idealism.

Take at random some of Greece's present-day publications, verses, narrations, discourses of ideas. What will you encounter almost without fail? Boredom, disillusionment, nostalgia for things gone by, fatalism, a defeatist attitude. Poetry, the most sincere form of our sensitivity, speaks only of death. I could quote here the words of the most enlightened people of Greece, words which sound like the cries of a man shipwrecked. What need is there to try, to struggle, to live, since "nothing can be done in the *Romeiko* [Roman land]?" That is the teaching which is inferred from the words of most of our spiritual leaders. Their most important pursuit is destroying the hopes of those younger and preserving the decline of Greece. I have no desire to accuse them. It is natural for them not to expect anything from the future, as these are the people who saw all their struggles and dreams dishonored by the disgrace of 1922. And it is also natural that these defeated [men], who have ceased to believe in themselves, do not allow others to have more self-assuredness.

We are broken, withered, lost in the jumble of modern life. No one expects anything good from Greece. No hope dawns anywhere. This moment is, of course, a wonderful moment.

At such moments, if the right people are found, beautiful things sometimes happen. Youthful forces, lost, drifting, wandering through the atmosphere with no purpose. None of the young people know what they will, but they all *will* strongly. Taking place around us, without a definite object, is an intensity of new *wills*. A seed falling on such ground can one day give unhoped-for fruit.

A people who has inside itself a soul, upon reaching the absolute bottom of disillusionment, finds the strength to react against itself. It reacts suddenly, without any warning or any groundwork. The restoration of the soul is not a gradual development, but a sudden awakening of slumbering forces, a violent return from decline to life. Some people, uninvited and undesirable, sever all ties with the ailing past and move onward. They grab the drifting forces, give them self-awareness, urge them on towards new directions. They begin a new era.

The New Greece is a land with a soul. She showed this by reacting forcefully against herself in the hours of her greatest despair. In the early nineteenth century, entombed and forgotten, she suddenly created the Revolution, and won her independence. At the end of that same century, with a similar outburst of unknown forces, she overturned the intellectual Middle Ages which were oppressing her. Perhaps, without anyone realizing it, the tide is turning again.

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

EMANUEL RÁDL: THE WAR BETWEEN CZECHS AND GERMANS

Title: *Válka Čechů s Němci* (The war between Czechs and Germans)

Originally published: Prague, Čin, 1928

Language: Czech

The excerpts used are from *Válka Čechů s Němci* (Prague: Melantrich 1993), pp. 117–122 and 178–182.

About the author

Emanuel Rádl [1873, Pyšely (central Bohemia) – 1942, Prague]: Czech biologist and philosopher. He came from a merchant family. After studying at grammar schools in Benešov and Domažlice (*Ger.* Taus), he spent two years in the novitiate of the Augustinian cloister after which he became a Protestant. He studied biology at the Czech branch of Prague University where he was influenced by the lectures of **Tomáš G. Masaryk**. After graduation, he taught at various secondary schools, and in 1904 he became a private docent in the physiology and the history of biological sciences at the University of Prague. At the beginning of the century, he published extensively on various biological topics from general anatomy and morphology to experimental etiology and the history of biological theories, becoming internationally known in his field after publishing the monumental *Geschichte der biologischen Theorien* (History of biological theories). After the establishment of Czechoslovakia he became professor of methodology in the natural sciences at Charles University in Prague. Simultaneously, as a civic and religious activists he took part in many political and cultural controversies of his time. Together with J. L. Hromádka he founded the Prague branch of the YMCA and the philosophical-theological journal *Křesťanská revue* (Christian revue) and he co-founded the Czechoslovak League for Human Rights. He was also an editor of the political-cultural journal *Nové Atheneum* (New Athenaeum) and of the leading philosophical journal *Česká mysl* (Czech mind) starting in 1932 and, together with Zdeněk Tobolka, the founder of the main republican encyclopedia *Masarykův slovník naučný* (Masaryk's educational dictionary, 1925–1933). He was a long-serving chairman of the Philosophical Association as well as of the VIII International Philosophical Congress held in Prague in 1934. A year later, a serious illness forced him to retire from public life until his death in 1942. His individualist and religiously based democratic ideals made him a *persona non grata* after 1938 under Nazi control and hampered his image later under communist rule. As a theorist of nationalism and democracy, he was rediscovered first by the anti-communist dissidents and, after the changes of 1989, by the broader Czech public. Most recently, his biological work, above all, his history of biological theories, was published in its first full critical Czech edition in 2006, attracting considerable attention.

Main works: *Untersuchungen über den Phototropismus der Tiere* [Analyses of animal phototropism] (1902); *Geschichte der biologischen Theorien* [A history of biological theories] (1905, 1909, 1913); *Dějiny vývojových teorií v biologii devatenáctého století* [A history of evolutionary theories in nineteenth-century biology] (1909); *Neue Lehre vom zentralen Nervensystem* [New teachings on the central nervous system] (1912); *Uvahy vědecké a filosofické* [Scientific and philosophical considerations] (1914); *Romantická věda* [Romantic science] (1918); *Náboženství a politika* [Religion and politics] (1921); *Západ a východ* [West and east] (1925); *Moderní věda* [Modern science] (1926); *Válka Čechů s Němci* [The war between Czechs and Germans] (1928); *Národnost jako vědecký problém* [Nationality as a scientific problem] (1929); *Dějiny filosofie* [History of philosophy] (1932–33); *O německé revoluci* [On the German revolution] (1933); *Utěcha z filozofie* [Consolations of philosophy] (1946).

Context

The young generation of Czech intellectuals, who entered political and cultural life after the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918, was deeply affected by **Masaryk's** thought and political activism. Many members of the 'enthusiastic' or 'pragmatic' generation (such as Ferdinand Peroutka, Karel Čapek, and František Langer), nevertheless, understood Masaryk's work as inspirational rather than canonical. They emphasized his work ethos, political engagement and moral resoluteness, but they were rather critical of his philosophy of history and metaphysical concepts. Instead of seeking the 'meaning' of Czech history, they were interested in establishing functioning democratic institutions, the creation of a 'democratic mentality' in Czechoslovak society and the reform of classic liberalism in order to make it more responsive to social justice. These intellectuals contributed to what is called the 'Castle' politics. This refers to politics based on the informal authority and charismatic personality of President Masaryk and his adherents, performed through the agency of personal influence on political parties and institutions.

Emanuel Rádl counted himself among Masaryk's disciples, although he differed in many respects from the 'pragmatic' generation. He studied biology and was a partisan of Bergsonian vitalism and Hans Driesch's biological entelechy, which led him to introduce the term 'organic purpose' for explaining natural processes. In his view, this was the ultimate goal which oriented the life and creation of organisms, which, however, stood beyond time and space. Rádl also applied this conception to his theories of humankind and civilization, but he kept the methods of natural and human sciences strictly separate. He also argued that human existence had a final goal. However, the

organic purpose in this case, stood for a rational and task-achieving behavior. For him, people "know what they are doing," they clarify their opinions in the process of critical discussion, they assert and fight for their goals.

Rádl also used his dualistic and Platonic conceptions in his writings on nationalism. In his view, there were two basic conceptions of the nation. In the first one, the nation is understood as a natural fact, a tribe or an organic community. In the second one, the nation is understood as a 'community of free choice,' in which every member decides for the explicit program of the community, through rational discussion. His notion of democracy was based on a resolute defense of the self-reflective, rational and morally aware individual against all forms of collectivism, populism or etatism.

Imbued with elements of both value conservatism and ethical socialism, Rádl's book *Válka Čechů s Němci* is probably the most radical critique of the first Czechoslovak Republic from a decisively modernist and democratic position. In the field of political thinking, Rádl drew up a polarity of national and civic principles and demonstrated that the national principle engendered by German Romanticism reigns in the whole region from the Rhine eastwards, informing the entire modern Czech political tradition. The Czech definition of the nation, a definition which also left its mark on the Czechoslovak constitution, derives from an organic understanding of nation and society. This applies to the would-be political concept of the Czechoslovak nation excluding all other nationalities apart from Czechs and Slovaks and revealing in fact an organic genealogy, which potentially, as Rádl prophetically declared in 1928, threatened to destroy the young Republic. Against the organic concept, Rádl promoted the model of contractual democracy that—far from being fully realized—developed in the Anglo-Saxon context out of the medieval institute of privileges. This model relied on 'ethical liberalism,' where the justice and the moral consciousness of the individual was considered to be above the state and the people. Ethical liberalism, in contrast to economic liberalism, was not supposed to be indifferent to religious needs but was supposed to respect the right of every individual to retain his or her own convictions and to assert them publicly.

Rádl's book caused a sensation, but his radical criticism was generally rejected. Historians such as **Josef Pekař** reproached him for alleged 'amateurism' in history, while others, contrary to Rádl's radical doubts, defended the political concept of a Czechoslovak nation. Rádl's intellectual legacy, nevertheless, proved to have long-term impact. As a philosopher and theorist of democracy, he was highly appreciated by Jan Patočka, the most original Czech philosopher of the twentieth century, who considered Rádl the most

original of Masaryk's followers for two reasons. First, like Masaryk, Rádl was deeply engaged in moral and religious problems and understood the modern crisis as a product of the loss of religious dimension in life. Second, he was convinced that to follow Masaryk meant to go beyond his teachings and to assume a critical stance towards him. Rádl's critique of nationalism and his democratic individualism resonated with the anti-communist democratic opposition in the 1970s and 1980s. As such, he was 'rediscovered' in Czech cultural and political discourse after 1989, with several of his books being republished; of which *Válka Čechů s Němci* had by far the greatest, albeit contested, intellectual impact.

MK

The war between Czechs and Germans

In the political life of the modern age, three types of democracy are being applied, although in practice they overlap and intermingle. These are the *organic* or German type, the *majority* type (democracy in the narrower sense) and the *contractual* or liberalistic. I shall clarify their essential features in the interpretations given below.

The organic concept of the people, nation, state, government, Church and other social formations seems to be the natural product of a primitively organized society. Here the individual has not yet become conscious of the idea of sovereignty over his own destiny. Here the individual is the slave either of fate, the monarchy, the state or the people. In this sense, the organic theory is the unconscious foundation of public life of the Orient and still prevails even in Europe in places where tribal feelings have not yet been overcome by the awareness of self-conscious individuals. Clan organization, the *zadruga*, and the blood feud are expressions of this mode of thinking. [...]

It is crucial to realize that the intellectual fathers of both socialism and Central European nationalism were Rousseau and Herder, and that Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism and Marxism share a common fundamental idea, namely, faith in the "people" as a natural force and suspicion of the power of the responsible individual. At several points in Herder's *Ideen* there are attacks on private property, the exploitation of the working people and expressions of faith in the creative originality of people. These are not chance comments, but represent a tendency in Herder's treatise to elevate uncivilized Slavdom above the civilized West and to accord more importance to the "working people" than to the "lords." [...]

What is the "Czechoslovak people" or perhaps more often the "Czechoslovak nation" in the terminology of our politicians? It does not consist simply of the present Czech and Slovak-speaking inhabitants of Czechoslovakia, but also includes past Czechs and Slovaks starting with Ur-father Čech and generations yet to come. It is not just a matter of the *aggregate* wills of these people, which might ultimately be ascertained in some statistical form, but of the *unconscious* of the Czech and Slovak people, defined as "national consciousness," "the legacy of Žižka"¹, "the spirit of the Czech nation" and so forth. The "Czech people" understood in this way stand against "Germans," "Hungarians," "immigrants" and so on, and against individual Czechs who "have betrayed the nation." Democracy is then considered to be the "rule of the people" thus defined.

This mystical concept of the people belongs to the tradition of organic thought. Herder, Fichte, Kollár, Jungmann, the Slavophiles, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Slavism and "national consciousness" are various expressions of this ideology, whose father is Herder, a German philosopher, the prophet of Slav patriotism but also the predecessor of Fichte, the ideological father of Pan-Germanism. We cannot remind ourselves too often that *modern Czech and German patriotism were children of the same German father*. The "Czechoslovak nation" (*lid československý*) and the *deutsches Volk* (that is to say, what today is understood by these terms) are brothers, whose birthplace was the cloudy plateau of German mysticism. "That which speaks the same language, was already connected by a host of invisible ties by Nature herself, before the emergence of human arts. It understands itself, and its self-understanding will grow. It belongs together, is naturally united and forms an indivisible whole. No people of foreign origin and foreign speech may be incorporated into it, or be mixed with it ..." So wrote Fichte on the "German folk," stressing its purity in opposition to the French and English people, and our Romantics learned from Fichte.

It is on this organic concept of the state that today's Central European nationalism is built. According to this form of nationalism, the nation—as a mystical force ruling down the ages—is a power to which all must submit; the state is the culmination of the national idea, and religion, science, industry and social organization are only important as the means by which a nation expresses and asserts itself. After the war our entire public was gripped by this ideology. [...]

Overall it can be said that the Anglo-Saxon countries hold to the contractual concept, while the Roman Catholic states on the European Continent

¹ Jan Žižka z Trocnova (c. 1360–1424): Czech Hussite military leader.

tend towards the organic concept moderated in the West by knightly chivalrous ideas, and in France by the ideology of the Revolution as well. East of the Rhine the organic concept becomes even more powerful. In Italy it is today the ruling theory. In the states of Central Europe it is the unconscious driving force of politics. In Orthodox countries politics is based on the mysticism derived from this form of faith. The ideology of Soviet Russia is built on organic theories. The Orient knows no other concept of society at all. [...]

The Czechoslovak state was founded as the state of Czechs and Slovaks but including large German and Hungarian minorities; there are in fact a third more Germans than Slovaks, and they are economically and culturally much stronger, while there are about half as many Hungarians as Slovaks. This quantitative ratio has, however, no importance within the tribal conception of the Czechoslovak state, according to which Czechs and Slovaks are the one and only tribe ('nation' in domestic terminology), since both belong to the northern branch of the Western Slavs and are similar in language and culture. This similarity is said to have been disrupted by the fact that for a thousand years, the two tribes developed apart from each other, with political separation and the influence of Germans on Czechs and of Hungarians on Slovaks causing a spiritual alienation. The new state theoretically recombines the two tribes in their original natural unity.

The organization of the Czechoslovak state is built on this ideology. The state is tribal ("national") being the state of a single tribe of "Czechoslovaks," that is, united Czechs and Slovaks; this tribe is the "state-forming nation"; its "Czechoslovak" language is the state language. The names "Czechoslovak Republic" and "Czechoslovak nation" designate both the state and tribal organization of these united Czechs and Slovaks. In the framework of this concept it is clear to every Czech and Slovak (and German) that a German is not a "Czechoslovak," nor a member of the "Czechoslovak nation," but is a member of a minority living on the territory of the republic. In all the official and unofficial acts of our state, the "Czechoslovak nation" means only and exclusively Czechs and Slovaks.

This concept of Czechoslovakism, essentially based on race, has nonetheless run into problems in recent political developments. This is because the Czechoslovak state did not emerge organically, as Herder's theory requires. [...] Czechs and Slovaks are held together by a constitution, laws, a government and authorities, but not by instincts—and supporters of the Romantic concept of the nation are revolting against this government of reason. In Bohemia the tribal concept of the nation has been rapidly overcome, at least in the sense that here the "Czechoslovak nation" is now considered to be not

just an instinct but an ideal, a program for the future, and that the nation remains to be created by purposeful cooperation between Czechs and Slovaks. The Slovaks, however, regard this purposive approach as violence; they are insisting on the nation in the Herderian sense; they are demanding that the Slovak and Czech nations be distinguished from each other; they are pointing out the great differences in language, culture and religion between Czechs and Slovaks, and as a result they are fighting for Slovak autonomy. [...]

The ideology of "minorities" has thus led to the following conception: a single nation, which is the ruler of the Czechoslovak Republic, is to be created out of Czechs and Slovaks; the members of the nation are "Czechoslovaks." Living alongside them in the state are "German and Hungarian-speaking inhabitants, inhabitants of Jewish nationality" and so forth. It is clear that Herder's concept of the state as the culmination of tribal consciousness lies at the basis of this conception, but it is also clear that the conscious combination of Czechs and Slovaks in a single "nation" goes beyond the limits of the Herderian idea. The question then arises: if it is advantageous to combine Czechs and Slovaks in one nation, a political nation, why not go the whole way and combine all the inhabitants of Czechoslovakia in one political nation? If the Czechoslovak nation ensures the cultural individuality of Czechs and Slovaks, as an entity raised above the differences between them, why not raise it a degree higher and thus also secure the cultural individuality of Germans and Hungarians?

The example of the "Czechoslovak language" may be used to show that this consequence is not as paradoxical as it appears to a reader used to the Central European concept of the nation. Our constitution lays down that "the Czechoslovak language is the state language of the Republic," but the constitutional commission had difficulty in saying *which language that was*. "The Constitutional Commission expressly declares that by using the term it in no way intended to take up a standpoint in relation to the literary and philosophical dispute on whether Czech and Slovak are different languages..., " that is to say, our state has two state languages and it is expressly declared that whether they are languages or dialects is a secondary issue, in other words: *there is no "special Czechoslovak language,"* and the Slovaks rightly protest against such a designation. It would be more correct to talk about "Czechoslovak languages" in the constitution, but the attempt to paper over differences between Slovaks and Czechs as far as possible and to create one nation has led to a terminology that does not fit reality. If, then, a "Czechoslovak nation" which has two state-recognized languages is possible, why would it not be possible to have a Czechoslovak nation with three or four languages?

As is clear, multilingualism is not in conflict with the concept of the nation. [...]

If we can create a Czechoslovak nation out of Czechs and Slovaks, why not to create it from Germans and Hungarians as well? If in this Czechoslovak nation, the language of 2,000,000 Slovaks, not always fully developed, enjoys the same rights as Czech, what prevents the Czechoslovak nation from being trilingual? Czechs do not understand this argument; the Slovaks accuse them of not being genuinely committed to the equality of Slovak with Czech and of actually thinking only of Czech, which it is hoped will swallow Slovak in time. If, however, we put ourselves in the shoes of a Slovak who wants genuine equality of Slovak with Czech, then we must ask on what grounds such a Slovak could then democratically justify the inequality of German? [...]

Translated by Anna Bryson

BRANKO MERXHANI: THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAOS

Title: *Organizimi i Kaosit* (The organization of the chaos)

Originally Published: In the monthly review *Neo-shqiptarisma*, Nr. 1, Tirana, 1930

Language: Albanian

The excerpts used are from A. Plasari ed., *Formula të Neoshqiptarismës. Përmbledhje shkrimesh* (Tirana: Apollonia, 1996), pp. 99–102.

About the author

Branko Merxhani [1894 Istanbul – 1981, Istanbul]: scholar and writer. He was born in Istanbul and educated in Germany. In all likelihood, only his father was Albanian. By the end of the 1920s he went to Gjirokastra, where, together with several other well-known intellectuals, he founded and published the journal *Demokratia*, which soon became one of the most important newspapers in Albania. It was through its pages that he first presented his ideological program, known as *Neo-shqiptarisma* (Neo-Albanianism). During the 1930s, Merxhani continued publishing in other journals, such as *Neo-shqiptarisma*, *Illyria*, *Minerva*, and finally, starting in 1936, his own monthly review, *Përprojekta shqiptare* (The Albanian endeavor). After the Italian invasion of Albania in April 1939, Merxhani left the country and fled to Istanbul, where he died in 1981. Merxhani's place in the national canon is rather peculiar. Despite his very important role as a publicist during the interwar period, his writings were banned by the communist authorities, and hence, he was completely forgotten for almost 60 years. The rediscovery of his activity coincided with the publication of his collected articles in 1996.

Main works: *Formula të Neo-Shqiptarismës* [The formulas of neo-Albanianism] (1996); *Vepra* [Works] (2003).

Context

After the failure of the so-called 'Democratic Revolution' in December 1924, Ahmet Zogu returned to power. Many of his political and military opponents, such as Fan Noli, Luigj Gurakuqi and Hasan Prishtina were forced to leave the country. Others, like Bajram Curri, fled to the mountains to the north of the country with the hope of resuming political and military activity.

Conscious of his fragile position, Zogu undertook drastic measures to consolidate and reassert his power. By the end of the winter, two of the main leaders of the opposition, Luigj Gurakuqi and Bajram Curri, were assassinated. Many other activists were arrested and imprisoned. Zogu's other adversary, Bishop Noli, founded the *Komiteti Nacional Revolucionar* (National revolutionary committee) in Vienna, known as KONARE. The main aim of the committee was to topple Zogu's regime and restore democracy. KONARE published a journal called *Liria Kombëtare* (National freedom), through which the committee tried to mobilize Albanians for a final struggle. It was in the pages of this journal that the first Albanian communists, Halim Xhelo and Riza Cerova, presented their political and social programs. Nevertheless, the political activity of KONARE, the name of which changed in 1928 to the *Komiteti i Çlirimit Kombëtar* (Committee of national liberation), had limited influence within the country, which was already under the total control of Zogu's power apparatus.

After three years under republican regime, on 1 September 1928, the 'National Council' proclaimed the foundation of the Kingdom of Albania with Ahmet Zogu as King. The new state took the form of a constitutional monarchy; however, the real power lay in the hands of the king.

Although this was the beginning of a period of relative political stability, there were enormous social and economical problems. The level of poverty was very high, especially in rural areas, and the agrarian character of Albanian economy appeared to be one of the main obstacles for the development of the country. The level of education was dramatically low and more than 85% of the population was illiterate. And yet, by the beginning of the 1930s, intellectual and publishing activity reached a peak in the history of modern Albania.

The most acute question of the era was how to develop the country and achieve social, economic and political progress. Different alternatives were presented, engendering never-ending, and rarely fruitful, discussions. The first alternative was presented by the so-called *Të Vjetërit* (The old) group, whose main organ was the journal *Besa* (Honor). The term 'conservative' has been used with respect to this group, but this could be misleading. 'The Old' represented the interests of the landowners and generally the old nobility, having its origins in the Ottoman past. In their accounts they focused on Albanian history and the so-called 'good old traditions.' For them, the models of development for the country were to be derived from the past, especially with respect to the patterns of social order. Hence, their special concerns were traditional customary laws, the strong position of the landowners, and

financial restrictions on the urban bourgeoisie. They were fervent supporters of the monarchy and king Zogu.

Another group was formed in strong opposition to these ideas bearing the name *Të Rinjtë* (The young), which functioned not only as a linguistic antonym but also as an ideological statement. They were mostly young people, some of them descendants of elite families, usually educated in the West, above all in Paris, Vienna and Rome. In general, the group represented the new Albanian bourgeoisie. They disseminated their ideas through the journal *Arbëria* and the review *Illyria*. They supported the monarchy and the King, but also demanded radical changes as well as the appropriation of western institutions in political, economic and social life. Hence, their program was identified as a call for the 'Westernization' of the country. In 1935 king Zogu appointed a new government, consisting entirely of members of 'The Young' group. Several reforms were undertaken but the results were not as successful as expected. The government did nothing to resolve the main problem facing Albanian society, namely the demand for agrarian reform. Soon, known for his pragmatic attitude, Zogu restored the cabinet which was made up of the old elites.

It was in the context of rising demands for the implementation of social reforms, especially with respect to the agrarian question, that a new group appeared in the intellectual arena, namely the Albanian left, which was under the influence of the Soviet Union. The first Albanian communist group was created in Korça in 1929, and soon became very active, mainly under the direction of a former activist of KONARE, Ali Kelmendi, who had also lived in the Soviet Union. In several militant papers such as *Përpara* (Forward) and *Bota e re* (New world), a series of articles appeared criticizing Albanian politics and supporting social reform, especially among the rural masses. Such activity and ideas were perceived as subversive by the regime, and these newspapers continuously suffered under official censorship.

In 1934, another communist group established in Shkodra began publishing a review called *Buletini Jeshil* (The green bulletin). This town experienced the first clashes between communists and other intellectual groups, especially the Catholics, for whom Shkodra was a stronghold. Traditionally oriented and with a special concern for the religious aspects of social life, these intellectuals and publishers strongly opposed Bolshevik ideas.

It is impossible to discuss the intellectual life of Albania in the interwar period without accounting for the contribution of men of letters from the so-called 'Catholic Circle of Shkodra.' Such journals as *Hylli i Dritës* (The day-star), founded and directed in 1913 by **Gjergj Fishta**, and *Leka*, directed by

father Zef Valentini, left their mark on the cultural and scientific life of interwar Albania. *Hylli i Dritës* in particular, with articles on folklore, history and society, became one of the most significant periodicals of the period. In 1933, under the direct influence of father Gjergj Fishta, the *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit* (The canon of Lekë Dukagjin) was published. It is a collection of oral norms collected over almost 30 years by another well-known Franciscan, Shtjefën Gjeçov-Kryeziu. Another significant scholarly publication related to the activities of that group was the fourteen volume collection of Albanian folklore, containing mainly lyric and epic songs, proverbs, tales and rare words, which appeared between 1937 and 1944 under the title *Visaret e Kombit* (The treasures of the nation), and is still considered a masterpiece of its kind.

It was in the context of this discussion that the program of Branko Merxhani appeared. Evading vague discussions on the ambiguous position of Albania between the East and the West, it proposes a specific agenda directed towards the shaping of an entirely new Albanian society. For him, the path to development did not rest upon constitutional order, but the implementation of new social and cultural patterns in Albanian society. However, a primary condition for this was a new understanding of the nation, which was to be based on the main achievements of contemporary philosophy and sociology.

Merxhani named his socio-cultural program *Neo-Shqiptarizma* (Neo-Albanianism), and appealed to the young generations (*djalëria*) of Albanians educated both home and abroad to implement it. The program was first presented at the end of 1928 in a series of short weekly articles published in the journal *Demokratia* in Gjirokastra under the title *Formula të Neo-Shqiptarismës* (The formulas of neo-Albanianism). Merxhani was the first to introduce to the Albanian public such thinkers as Comte, Nietzsche, Renan, Le Bon, Durkheim, Weber and Bergson, not only through translations of their works, but also as sources of inspiration for his ideas on the social and cultural order of Albanian society. It is in their writings that Merxhani found new definitions for such notions as nation, state, religion, language, culture and race, which he then adapted to the Albanian realities. However, this appropriation did not only happen at the conceptual level. It was also conceived as a starting point for the introduction of local reform measures. Based on these precepts, he proposed a new educational policy, the reorganization of the schooling system, the implementation of a new agrarian reform, and other measures of social character.

In the 1930s, when the situation in Albania deteriorated with the effects of the Great Depression and the suppression of the Fieri revolt in 1935 by gov-

ernment forces, Merxhani became more political in his writings. Amidst the growing influence of the fascist model of state promoted by the pro-Italian circles in Shkodra, on the one hand, and, of the Soviet model, promoted by the young communist activists and writers on the other, Merxhani turned towards Kemalist Turkey. His main argument was based on the similarity between the social and cultural conditions of the two countries, and on the successful application of the Kemalist reforms in Turkey.

However, Merxhani's model remained an intellectual utopia. With the Italian occupation of Albania, fascist models became more influential in social and cultural life. Known to be an adversary to fascist ideology, Merxhani was forced to flee first to Athens, and finally to Istanbul. He was also known, however, as a firm critic of communist ideology. His works were banned with the establishment of the communist regime in Albania. In contrast, Merxhani's ideas have found an extremely fertile ground in post-communist Albania. The need for the re-definition of social, cultural and political life is still as acute among Albanians as it was before the Second World War, when Branko Merxhani formulated his program.

RH

The organization of the chaos

Before starting to live and present themselves, each man or each nation must firstly organize the chaos which exists inside them (Nietzsche)¹

Today our Albania is just a small chaotic world. There is so much pain and sadness inside us, along with traces of destruction and slavery, the heritage of that wounding historical and social clash. The agitation and anarchy present in our language are just a small part, an image of our total historical and social destruction. Such agitation and anarchy are present in all our dynamic efforts toward civilization. They are also present in our ideas, social tendencies, and even more in our understanding of the real form and essence of social institutions. Our whole life lies in anarchy. We have no *ideals*. There is no *rationalism* in us. We have an immense lack of any predisposition to undertake deep scientific research. What are the sources of such evil? Is there an *historical reason*? And, from the sociological point of view, what is the reason of this state of things?

¹ The author does not provide reference to any particular source for the quotation here. Most probably it is an impressionistic rephrasing of a Nietzschean aphorism.

These are some of the questions which Neo-Albanianism poses to our intellectual and idealistic youth. Meanwhile, one should add that without an answer to these questions, it is impossible to take even one step forward.

The time has passed, when *nationalism* was closely connected to *Romanticism*. The *nationalism* of today values *reality*. It is a live expression of sociology as a science, a field for the implementation of social hygiene, a laboratory to discover psychological and social diseases. This scientific research used for discovering the sources of evil presents itself as the only positive value. The main obligation for the Youth (that Youth, which, enlightened by the light of reason, feels without any hesitation a deep respect for the historical fate of our Fatherland, and already treads the path of development and of the future) in the eyes of Neo-Albanianism is the following: the processes of research and definition should be based on a scientific framework, but also on a philosophical and clear body of *national ideals*.

An intellectual is aware of the greatest and most terrible danger: if he wishes to start a journey in the infinite and chaotic sphere of his own fantasy, he will be in danger of falling into error and self-disappointment. This sphere contains only fake worlds and dead values, which bring only sleepiness and “genial utopias.”

Science is illumination. This is the world of reality. We shall not define our political life through romanticism and fantasy. The problems of life and the mysteries of the future need that illumination. We should turn our eyes towards life, which means to see life as it is, not as we want it to be. Life needs a solution. We cannot find this solution in a national fantasy, because it is hidden deeper in the national spirit.

This is our starting point: to shed light on the deep causes of the social anarchy we have inherited from the past, we should hold on to the torch of sociological science. And this is our reference point: to build the Albania of tomorrow, enlightened and civilized, on the ruins of yesterday’s Albania—an *Albania that is not stuck in history, but civilized*.

The aim of our war: the *perfection of life*.

The Albania of feelings, the Albania of reason is waiting for its creators to shed light over the fantasies of the past. We are not the famous descendants of mythic Pelasgs,² nor the remnants of the Illyrians: *We are Albanians—a new nationality*.

² Pelasgs (*Gr.* Pelasgoi; *Lat.* Pelasgi; *Alb.* Pellazgët): an ancient people mentioned by Homer, Herodotus and Thucydides as the inhabitants of ancient Greece up to the twelfth century BC. Most of the Aegean islands and parts of Asia Minor were also inhabited by them. In the mid-nineteenth century, Johan Georg von Hahn launched

The story about the Pelasgs is just an absurd hypothesis. We should leave this sophism behind. No enlightened Turk today is dreaming of old Turanic stories. No contemporary Greek with any brain pretends to be a descendant of Pericles. Even glorious Romanians seem to have forgotten their one-time origin: the only life of the nations lies in the miracle of development, which regulates the great waves of history.

Yes! We are Albanians and we are a new nationality. Our Mother Nation gave birth to a new child: we are the children. Like the New-Greeks, like the New-Turks in Asia Minor, we were born during a magic summer night as a result of a creative, dynamic, fresh and eternal force of the nature. We are still young boys. Our consciousness is not yet aware of the face of the Creator. Our eyes are not able to look at the sun of reason. Where are our social memories? Where is the unification of our feelings? Where is the poetry, the literature to represent our race? Where is the national spirit, pure and advanced? Where is our language? Where is our culture? Albania has not yet built its own temple.

Translated by Rigels Halili

the theory of the Pelasgic antecedence of modern Albanians. Although nowadays the ethno-genesis of Albanians is linked with the Illyrians, the concept of Hahn still appears from time to time in discussions regarding this topic.

HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ: WITH FIRE AND SWORD; TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

Title: *Ogniem i mieczem* (With fire and sword); *Krzyżacy* (Teutonic knights)
Originally published: as *Ogniem i mieczem. Opowieść z lat dawnych* [With fire and sword. A story from ancient times] in *Słowo*, 1883–1884. First edition of *Teutonic knights* in *Słowo* and in *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 1897–1900

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from English translations: *With fire and sword. An historical novel of Poland and Russia*, translated by Jeremiah Curtin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1898), pp. 770–776; *The Teutonic knights*, translated by Alicia Tyszkiewicz, newly edited and revised by Mirosław Lipiński (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1993), pp. 762–786.

About the author

Henryk Sienkiewicz [1846, Wola Okrzejska (in Podlachia, present-day east Poland) – 1916, Vevey (Switzerland)]: writer. Born into a gentry family in the poor region of Podlasie, Sienkiewicz moved with his family to Warsaw, where he had the opportunity to study at *Szkoła Główna*, a Polish higher education institution which was closed down after the defeat of the January uprising in 1864. He never completed his studies at the Russian Warsaw University that replaced the *Szkoła Główna*, but very soon became one of the most popular journalists in the Russian part of Poland. He traveled to the USA and Western Europe, and visited Istanbul and Athens, publishing witty reports and essays in the Polish press. In the 1880s, Sienkiewicz started to publish his historical novels, which soon became very popular. In 1900, a special state committee offered him a small estate in Obłęgorek near Kielce. Sienkiewicz to this day is celebrated as a writer, historian and pedagogue. His work was also popular outside Poland, and in 1905 he received the Nobel prize for his novel *Quo vadis?* Sienkiewicz did not consider himself primarily an artist. In spite of the respect shown for his work, he acted more like a philanthropist than a literary figure. He established scholarships for Polish writers (among the beneficiaries were Stanisław Wyspiański, Maria Konopnicka and Stanisław Przybyszewski), took care of orphans, and used every opportunity to promote the ‘Polish case’ in the West. Commitment toward national duties and individual responsibility for the national cause were also the characteristic qualities of other students of the *Szkoła Główna* such as Bolesław Prus and **Aleksander Świętochowski**. Sienkiewicz’s political sympathies were close to those of the Polish nationalist camp: during the revolution

of 1905, he advocated the autonomy of the Congress Kingdom (the western part of Russian Poland), and defended national solidarity under the leadership of **Roman Dmowski's** 'National Democracy' Party. He attacked the German authorities for their attempts to assimilate Poles from Prussia, and accused the Polish socialists of national betrayal. During the First World War Sienkiewicz was active in a Polish exile group in Switzerland that supported the Entente. He assisted the Red Cross in their efforts to provide medical aid for the inhabitants of the Polish territories.

Main works: *Humoreski z teki Worszyłły* [Humoresques from Worszyłło's case] (1872); *Szkice węglem* [Sketches with charcoal] (1880); *Za chlebem* [For bread] (1880); *Janko Muzykant* [Janko the musician] (1880); *Z pamiętnika poznańskiego nauczyciela* [From the diary of a Poznań teacher] (1880); *Bartek Zwycięzca* [Bartek the winner] (1882); *Latarnik* [Lighthouse-keeper] (1882); *Ogniem i mieczem* [With fire and sword] (1883–1884); *Potop* [The deluge] (1886); *Pan Wołodyjowski* (1888); *Sachem* (1889); *Bez dogmatu* [Without dogma] (1891); *Rodzina Połanieckich* [Połaniecki family] (1895); *Quo vadis* (1896); *Krzyżacy* [Teutonic knights] (1900); *W pustyni i w puszczy* [In desert and forest] (1911).

Context

Henryk Sienkiewicz belonged to the group of writers and publicists who were influenced by the ideology of positivism. They advocated the economic and social modernization of the country as well as the termination of explicit irredentism. Since the Russian authorities were not interested in supporting Polish development, the positivists relied on the internal resources of Polish society, appealing to the gentry and the bourgeoisie to support the modernization of the country and the education of the lower social strata. Contrary to other members of the intelligentsia in the Russian part of Poland (such as **Aleksander Świętochowski** or Eliza Orzeszkowa), Sienkiewicz, a successful bourgeois writer and journalist (both financially and in terms of popularity), was a conservative.

In the 1880s, Sienkiewicz started to write historical novels. The three novels expressly written to strengthen the national resolve by invoking Poland's glorious past, *Ogniem i mieczem* (With fire and sword), *Potop* (The deluge), and *Pan Wołodyjowski*, became a very popular trilogy. Here, Sienkiewicz describes the seventeenth century wars against the Cossacks, Sweden and the Ottoman Empire. While the heroes of the *Trilogy* are soldiers defending the *Rzeczpospolita* against external and internal enemies, Sienkiewicz's evocative literary style succeeds to transcend mere national propaganda. After the first publication of 'With fire and sword' public and the majority of literary critics were enthusiastic, and the book became an instant classic and a popular history textbook. While both *Potop* and *Pan Wołodyjowski* describe mili-

tary clashes with Sweden and Turkey, the first part of the trilogy had a hidden agenda. Sienkiewicz, who often described the victories of Polish armies, in this case, presented the victory over the Ukrainians as a tragedy for both sides. The only profiteer of the conflict was—as Sienkiewicz suggests—Russia, who succeeded in gaining control over both Poland and the Ukraine.

The *Trilogy* was widely debated. In the 1880s, when ‘With fire and sword’ was published, the debate on national history was dominated by the Cracow conservative school (see **Michał Bobrzyński**, *History of Poland in outline*). While **Józef Szujski** and Bobrzyński bitterly criticized the *Rzeczpospolita*, Sienkiewicz played the role of a national prophet propounding the heritage of a glorious past. The debate surrounding ‘With fire and sword’ played out on two levels. Some writers such as Bolesław Prus and Świętochowski questioned the literary quality of the trilogy, pointing out its schematic nature, its nationalist overtones, and even the sexual and moral deviations of some characters. They disparaged it as a glorification of ‘national slaughter’. On the other hand, the popularity of the book exceeded by far any other Polish novel of the time.

‘Teutonic knights’ describes the medieval conflict between the Polish Kingdom, allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the German Teutonic order. The work offers a perspective on the ‘sacred past’, devoid of the bitterness that accompanies a civil war. The strongly anti-German timbre of Sienkiewicz’s work was boosted ten years after its publication in 1910, when Poles celebrated the 500th anniversary of the victorious battle of Tannenberg (Grunwald in Polish tradition, where the Teutonic knights were defeated by the Polish–Lithuanian coalition under the king Władysław Jagiełło and the grand duke of Lithuania, Vytautas). ‘Teutonic knights’ is thematically close to the trilogy. It portrays the Polish medieval knighthood as it was transformed into the gentry. The ‘Teutonic knights’ depicts the struggle between the Slavic East and the German West, but also describes the appropriation of Western medieval culture, which arrived in Poland simultaneously with German aggression. At the same time, Sienkiewicz questions the cultural role played by the Germans themselves.

The book met with approval and even received more unequivocal praise than the trilogy. The time of the Warsaw positivists and the Cracow school was coming to an end. ‘Teutonic knights’ first served as the basis of a political claim for ‘National Democracy’, and after 1918, served as a source of anti-German sentiment; playing a role similar to that of Polish Romanticism as an everlasting source of anti-Russian ideas. Until 1945 it was instrumentalized mainly by the right wing of the Polish political scene. After the Sec-

ond World War, however, communist propaganda made overt use of such nationalist narratives to legitimize its own rule. The tradition of the Battle of Tannenberg, canonized in the form given by Sienkiewicz, was used as an example of Polish participation in the struggle of 'progressive' Slavic nations against 'barbaric' Germans. Not surprisingly, 'With fire and sword' did not share this kind of official communist recognition.

Since 1918, the 'Teutonic Knights' has been on the compulsory reading list of the elementary school curriculum. In 1960, Aleksander Ford, a Polish film director of Jewish origin, directed a film version (in the late 1960s, Ford was forced to abandon the country due to the massive antisemitic campaign of the Władysław Gomułka regime). The two naked swords, as described in the excerpt used here, sent by the Germans to Władysław Jagiełło as a provocation, have become national symbols that are evoked even in commercials and political rallies.

Despite the unparalleled impact of his work on collective memory, the literary legacy of Henryk Sienkiewicz is ambiguous. In the words of **Witold Gombrowicz**, Sienkiewicz is "first class among second class writers," and his prominence in the national canon is unbearable and—at the same time—unavoidable.

MG

With fire and sword

On the fields of Berestechko those many legions met at last, and there was fought one of the greatest battles of history,—a battle the echoes of which thundered through all contemporary Europe. It lasted for three days. During the first two the fates wavered; on the third a general engagement decided the victory.

Prince Jeremi¹ began that engagement; and he was seen in front of the entire left wing as, armorless and bareheaded, he swept like a hurricane over the field against those gigantic legions, formed of all the mounted heroes of the Zaporozje², and all the Tartars,—Crimean, Nogai, and Bélgorod,—of Silistrian and Rumelian Turks, Jenissaries, Serbs, Wallachians, Periotés, and other wild warriors assembled from the Ural, the Caspian, and the swamps of Mæotis³ to the Danube. [...]

¹ Jeremi Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki (1612–1651): member of the aristocratic Polish-Ukrainian family, palatine of Ruthenia (Ukraine).

² In the original: Zaporozhe (*Ukr.* Zaporizhia): a region along the banks of Dnieper.

³ Mæotis: the Sea of Azov.

The whole army and the king stood gazing on this superhuman struggle. Leshchinski, the vice-chancellor, raised aloft the wood of the Holy Cross, and with it blessed the perishing.

Meanwhile, on the other flank, the army of the king was approached by the whole Cossack tabor, two hundred thousand strong, bristling with cannon, which vomited fire. It was like a dragon pushing slowly out of the woods his gigantic claws.

But before the bulk of the enemy had issued from the dust in which Vishnyevetski's regiments had disappeared, horsemen began to drop away from their ranks, then tens, hundreds, thousands, and tens of thousands of them, and rush to the height on which stood the Khan surrounded by his chosen guard. The wild legions fled in mad panic and disorder, pursued by the Poles. Thousands of Cossacks and Tartars strewed the battle-field; and among them lay, cut in two by a double-handed sword, the sworn enemy of the Poles but the trusty ally of the Cossacks, the wild and manful Tugai Bey⁴.

The terrible prince had triumphed. [...]

Then Islam Girei⁵ quivered, left the field, and fled; and after him fled in disorder all the hordes,—the Wallachians, the Urumbali, the mounted warriors of the Zaporojie, the Silistrian Turks, and the renegades,—as a cloud before a whirlwind.

The despairing Hmelnitski caught up with the fugitives, wishing to prevail on the Khan to return to the battle; but the Khan, bellowing with rage at the sight of the hetman, ordered the Tartars to seize, bind him to a horse, and bear him away.

Now there remained but the Cossack tabor. [...]

Now a storm burst in the heavens, and measureless torrents of rain rushed down. "God was washing the land after a just battle." The rain lasted some days, and some days the armies of the king rested, wearied from struggles; during this time the tabor surrounded itself with ramparts, and was changed into a gigantic movable fortress.

With the return of fair weather began a siege, the most wonderful ever seen in life. The hundred thousand warriors of the king besieged the twice one hundred thousand Zaporojians. The king needed cannon, provisions, ammunition. The Zaporojians had immeasurable supplies of powder and all necessities, and besides seventy cannon of heavier and lighter caliber. But at the head of the king's armies was the king, and the Cossacks had not Hmel-

⁴ Tugai bey (?–1651): Crimean Tatar military leader and politician.

⁵ Islam Ghiray III (1604–1654): khan of the Crimean khanate from 1644 to 1654.

nitski.⁶ The armies of the king were strengthened by a recent victory; the Cossacks were in doubt of themselves. [...]

It was Monday, July 7, 1651. The morning of that day rose pale, as if from fright; the dawn was bloody in the east; the sun appeared, red, sickly; a sort of bloody reflection lighted the woods and forests. From the Polish camp they were driving the horses to pasture; the Cossack tabor sounded with the voices of awakened men. Fires were lighted, the morning meal prepared. All saw the departure of Bogun,⁷ his retinue and the cavalry going with him, by the aid of which he intended to drive away the voevoda of Bratslav, who had occupied the rear of the tabor and was injuring the Cossack works with his cannon.

[...] The leader, the retinue, and the cavalry receded gradually from the tabor, came to the edge of the forest, glittered once more in the early sunlight, and began to disappear in the thicket. Then some awful, terrified voice shouted, or rather howled, at the gate of the tabor: "Save yourselves, men!"

"The officers are fleeing!" roared hundreds and thousands of voices. The roar passed through the crowd, as when a whirlwind strikes a pine-wood; and then a terrible, unearthly cry burst forth from two hundred thousand throats: "Save yourselves! The Poles! The officers are fleeing!" Masses of men rose at once, like a mad torrent. Fires were trodden out, wagons and tents overturned, palings broken to pieces, men trampled and suffocated. Piles of bodies barred the road. They rushed over corpses, amidst howls, shouts, uproar, groans. Crowds poured from the square, burst on to the bridge, stuck in the swamp; the drowning seized one another with convulsive embraces, and crying to heaven for mercy, sank in the cold moving swamp. On the bridge began a battle and slaughter for place. The waters of the Pleshova were filled with bodies. The Nemesis of history took terrible payment for Pilavtsi with Berestechko.⁸ [...]

The day of vengeance, defeat, and judgment had come. Whoever was not trampled or drowned went under the sword. The rivers were so filled with blood, that it could not be told whether blood or water flowed in them. The bewildered crowds, still more disordered, began to trample and push one another into the water, and drown. Death filled those awful forests, and reigned in them the more terribly since strong divisions began to defend themselves with

⁶ Bohdan Zynovii Mykhailovych Khmel'nyts'kyi (1595–1657): leader of the Cossack uprising against Poland (1648–1654).

⁷ Bogun (in the original, Bohun): a Cossack cavalry officer, one of the main figures of Sienkiewicz's story.

⁸ Berestechko (*Pol.* Beresteczko): small city in Wolhynia and site of a battle between the Cossacks and Polish army in 1651.

rage. Battles were fought in the swamp, on the stumps, in the field. The voevoda of Bratslav cut off retreat to the fugitives. In vain did the king give orders to restrain the soldiers. Mercy had perished; and the slaughter lasted till night,—a slaughter such as the oldest warriors did not remember, and the at recollection of which the hair rose on their heads in later times.

When at last darkness covered the earth, the victors themselves were terrified at their work. No “Te Deum” was sung, and not tears of joy, but of regret and sorrow, flowed from the eyes of the king.

So ended the first act in the drama of which Hmelnitski was the author. [...] ...then came the plague and the Swedes. The Tartars were almost continual visitors in the Ukraine, carrying legions of people into captivity. The Commonwealth became a desert; a desert the Ukraine. Wolves howled on the ruins of former towns, and a land once flourishing became a mighty graveyard. Hatred grew into the hearts and poisoned the blood of brothers.

Translated by Jeremiah Curtin in Henryk Sienkiewicz, *With Fire and Sword. An Historical Novel of Poland and Russia*, (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1898), pp. 770–776.

Teutonic knights

Meanwhile the German army, coming down from the highest part of the plain, passed Grunwald, passed Tannenberg, and halted in full battle array in the midst of the field. From the Polish camp below, there was an excellent view of the compact mass of iron-clad horses and knights. Keen eyes could even distinguish the various emblems embroidered on the standards flapping in the breeze: crosses, eagles, griffins, swords, helmets, lambs, and heads of bison and of bear. [...]

Jagiello had just come from the lakeshore and was on his way to the Polish companies on the left wing, where he had to belt a whole group of knights, when he was suddenly informed that two heralds were riding out from the Teutonic army.

His heart beat with hope.

“Perhaps they are coming with a just peace.”

“God grant it!” replied the clergy.

The king sent for Witold, but the latter could not come since he was already occupied with preparing his armies; meanwhile, the heralds approached the camp without any haste. [...]

"Grand Master Ulrich,"⁹ said the first, "challenges Your Majesty and Duke Witold to mortal battle, and in order to rouse your courage, which seems to have failed, sends you these two naked swords."

Thus saying, he laid the swords at the king's feet. Jaśko Mążyk of Dąbrowa interpreted his words to the king, but scarcely had he finished when the second herald with the griffin on his shield advanced, and said:

"Grand Master Ulrich bids us also inform you that if the field of battle seems too small to you, he will withdraw his armies somewhat so that you need not loiter in the thickets."

Jaśko Mążyk again interpreted his words. Silence fell, while the knights in the royal train ground their teeth at such arrogance and scorn.

Jagiello's last hopes went up in smoke. He had hoped for a mission of concord and peace, whereas it was actually a mission of arrogance and war.

So he raised his watery eyes and thus replied:

"Of swords we have enough, but I will take these as an omen of victory sent me by God himself through your hands. The field of battle will be marked out by Him. And it is to His justice that I now appeal, making complaint of my wrong and your lawlessness and pride. Amen!"

And two great tears rolled over his sunburnt cheeks. [...]

The sun inclined towards the west. A brief, heavy shower of rain fell and laid the dust. Jagiello, Witold, and Zyndram of Maszkowice were just preparing to ride to the battlefield when the bodies of the fallen leaders were brought before them. The Lithuanians brought the body of Grand Master Ulrich von Jungingen, pierced with pikes and covered with dust and blood, and placed it before the king; but he sighed mournfully and, looking at the huge corpse lying on its back on the ground, said:

"This is he who this very morning thought himself superior to all the powers of the earth."

Then tears began to roll like pearls down his cheeks and presently he spoke again:

"But as he died a brave death, we will do honor to his valor and give him a worthy Christian burial."

And straightaway he gave command for the body to be carefully washed in the lake and dressed in fine clothes and covered, until the coffin should be ready, with a cloak of the Order. [...]

And up above, in the reddening sky, there whirled and circled flocks of crows, ravens, and eagles, croaking and rejoicing noisily at the sight of food.

⁹ Ulrich von Jungingen (1360–1410): grand master of the Teutonic knights.

And not only did the hostile Teutonic Order lie now prostrate at the king's feet; the entirety of German power, which had hitherto been overspreading the unhappy Slavonic regions like a flood, was broken against Polish breasts on this day of redemption.

So to you, sacred past, and to you, sacrificial blood, be praise and honor for ever and ever!

Translated by Alicia Tyszkiewicz in Henryk Sienkiewicz, *The Teutonic knights*, newly edited and revised by Mirosław Lipinski (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1993), pp. 762–786.

ALEKO KONSTANTINOV: BAY GANYO

Title: *Бай Ганьо. Невероятни разкази за един съвременен българин* (Bay Ganyo. Unbelievable stories about a contemporary Bulgarian)

Originally Published: Sofia, Пенчо В. Спасов, 1895

Language: Bulgarian

The excerpts used are from *Произведения*, vol. I (Sofia: Български писател, 1957), pp. 109–110, 119–121, 123.

About the author

Aleko Konstantinov [1863, Svishtov (present-day north Bulgaria) – 1897, on the road to Pazardzhik (central Bulgaria)]: lawyer, journalist and writer. Born into an upper class family, Konstantinov received the best education available, graduating from the law school at Odessa. He became a public prosecutor in Sofia, but soon left his position because of political pressure and started to work as a lawyer. At the end of the nineteenth century, Konstantinov became quite famous as a free-lance journalist and an author of travelogues. He was a unique personality, sympathetic to leftist ideology but rarely involved in political activities himself. His pseudonym, which became his nickname, was *Щастливец* (lucky man). His passion for modern society and industry, as well as his social criticism is expressed in his first major work ‘To Chicago and back’. He was also the author of extremely sharp political satires especially on Prince Ferdinand’s regime and on the Prime-Minister Konstantin Stoilov. Konstantinov died at the age of 34, assassinated by extremists. The target, in fact, was his colleague Mihail Takev, with whom he was traveling for the latter’s campaign as a candidate of the ‘Democratic Party’ in the parliamentary elections. In the national cultural tradition, Konstantinov functions as the paradigmatic figure of an *ami du people*, a critic of political corruption, and a proponent of modern life (technical progress, tourism, etc.). He is traditionally perceived as a positive counterpart to the ambiguous hero he created, Bay Ganyo.

Main works: *До Чикаго и назад* [To Chicago and back] (1894); *Бай Ганьо* [Bay Ganyo] (1895).

Context

Public and private life in the autonomous Bulgarian principality was profoundly transformed by state-supported policies of modernization. Social and cultural dimensions of life in particular were deeply affected by what was

called the process of 'Europeanization'. European models of the modern way of life were hastily sought by the populations of the rapidly growing modernized cities, in particular by members of the state administration, the intellectuals, and the merchant class. This complex process of social transformation involved, of course, a number of paradoxes and cultural misreadings. In his famous play 'The misunderstood civilization' (1871), the influential playwright Dobri Voynikov satirized the multiple misunderstandings caused by the obsession with European culture and lifestyle. With his *Bay Ganyo*, Aleko Konstantinov followed Voynikov's tradition, radicalizing it in the form of a social satire.

Bay Ganyo is, without any doubt, the most popular figure in Bulgarian literature. Aleko Konstantinov's hero has become the ultimate personification of Bulgarianness in the eyes of the common reader. The family name of Bay Ganyo, is, symbolically enough, Balkanski. Ganyo Balkanski is a Bulgarian *nouveau riche*, who travels throughout Europe to sell rose oil. The structure of the story is not cohesive: there is no general plot but a few anecdotal events about Bay Ganyo's 'adventures' narrated by Bulgarian students, who had met Bay Ganyo in different locations around Europe (for example, 'Bay Ganyo at the opera' and 'Bay Ganyo at the baths'). The comic element in these anecdotes emanates from the discrepancy between the supposed European cultural code and Bay Ganyo's uncouth behavior. It is notable that Bay Ganyo is not a victim of his ignorance. He always succeeds in imposing his own idiosyncrasies in a rather aggressive way and, moreover, behaves like a colonizer, perceiving the other's cultural order as primitive and underdeveloped. The selected excerpts demonstrate a crucial 'ideological' digression from the text in order to discuss issues related to European culture. The civilizational pathos of the author, as illustrated in these paragraphs, implies the creation of a homogeneous negative image of the Balkans, or more generally of the Orient, as the Other of Europe.

The figure of Bay Ganyo was a real bone of contention in the debate on Bulgarian 'national character'. The interpretations of Konstantinov's famous hero depended upon the cultural and the ideological context in which they were articulated. It would be misleading to presume that Bay Ganyo was initially perceived as a personification of the Bulgarian national character. Rather, he was perceived as a version of the uncultivated and aggressive *braggadocio*, as encountered in *comedia dell'arte*. This perception, common in European literature, was implied, for instance, in the sub-title of the first translation of Konstantinov's work into French, *Bay Ganyo ou le Tartarin bulgare* (referring to Alphonse Daudet's famous hero Tartarin de Tarascon).

Among the first critics who analyzed the 'extra-literary' substratum of Bay Ganyo were leading Marxist thinkers, first Dimitar Blagoev and later Georgi Bakalov. For them, Bay Ganyo was an embodiment of a new social type: the brutal entrepreneur, and (in view of the second and less famous part of the book) the bourgeois politician. The first authors to perceive Bay Ganyo as a synthesis of negative national features were Krastyu Krastev, the director of the leading modernist journal *Мисъл* (Thought) (where the first feuilletons about Bay Ganyo were published), and the literary historian Alexander Teodorov-Balan. In the 1920s, Boyan Penev, one of the most important modernist literary historians, reacted against such a perception, stating that Bay Ganyo was a universal type and not a negative national one, personifying cultural underdevelopment rather than a specific Bulgarian predicament.

The reception of Bay Ganyo's figure as a negative cultural or national type became more significant in the context of the development of the field of national psychology (or characterology) and the debates related to it. In the 1930s, the German Slavist Gerhard Gesemann instigated the most intensive debate in this respect. Gesemann interpreted Bay Ganyo positively in terms of racial theories as a biological type, personifying Bulgarian national strength. Some of the most influential Bulgarian intellectuals of the period (such as Dimitar Mihalchev, Georgi Konstantinov, Konstantin Petkanov and Georgi Tzanev) reacted to Gesemann's article in a 1931 issue of *Философски преглед* (Philosophical review). Later, right-wing authors attempted to symbolically rehabilitate Bay Ganyo. Thus, for Nayden Sheytanov, Bay Ganyo is more than simply a biological type. Surprisingly, he interprets Bay Ganyo in a metaphysical perspective as a self-ironizing spirit, and, at the same time radicalizing the biologist interpretation, describes him as the symbol of primordial vitality. Undoubtedly, this inherent ambiguity is the reason why this literary character became a crucial issue of debate in discussions on national psychology.

BM

Bay Ganyo

From Chapter 7: Bay Ganyo as a Guest

Bay Ganyo and the "stubborn kid" could not enter into a conversation. Somehow instinctively and from their first meeting they knew that they were not for each other because according to the Bulgarian saying (what elegant sayings created the Bulgarian genius!) "The birds of a feather flock to-

gether.” The first had come from Bulgaria and the other had lived in Europe. They should have been able to find a common topic for conversation, since there should be little difference between the West and our homeland. However, Bay Ganyo could not think of that difference and how could he! He, the man who travels always with his own atmosphere, his own manners and customs, he who looks for a place that fits his own tastes, meets people of his own kind, whose presence he is used to and in whom he, of course, does not see anything new. When he goes to Vienna, he usually takes a room in Hotel London. There the air is suffocating and smells of kitchen and of hydrogen sulphide in the same way as in his home, there he meets the same Turks, Armenians and Serbs whom he is used to meeting every day. He would not go to the Café Habsburg because he is afraid of having to pay too much. Instead he would go to the Greek cafe, which is dirty and full of suffocating smoke as are our cafes. If he goes to trade, he goes to the Bulgarian traders and he does not even think that through them he comes into contact with Europeans. That out of this limited sphere begins European life, he did not know and was not interested in learning about. The manners, the moral world of the European, his home atmosphere—which are all the result of an age-old tradition and the gradual perfection of mental abilities—the social struggles and the way they are conducted, the museums, the libraries, the philanthropic organizations, the fine arts and the thousand manifestations of progress did not burden Bay Ganyo’s mind.

“As if my father had listened only to operas,” would say Bay Ganyo, and fascinated by this ultra-retrograde principle, he would not be troubled too much by the “new fashion,” i.e. by civilization. But in spite all this, Bay Ganyo does not have the courage of the Chinese to build a wall to stop the invasion of civilization, and although the principle “my father did not do it and I will not do it either,” inspires him, one could see him putting on clean shirt and gloves; and when he is under even more pressure, he puts on a dress-coat, annoyed and with laughter, but he finally puts it. One could hear him saying “pardon,” speaking of the “constetution,” showing off here and there that he loves “soup,” when actually he would prefer chilly broth ahead of all European dishes.

From Chapter 8: Bay Ganyo in Switzerland

At any hour of the day I used to visit that cafe, from nine in the morning until late in the evening, and I used to always find the same persons who were busy with the same things—backgammon, *prefa* and *trenta una*. When

those young men had time to read and in what way they learned about the European culture remained unclear to me. The only thing which I saw was that almost none of them spoke decent French. Even before some of them opened their mouth to speak in that language, you would recognize that they came from the East. The rough intonation, the diction and the construction of the phrases were quite telling. From time to time to the company used to join a few nihilist Jews who were snapping at the tyrant from the dark corners of the pub. I don't understand the sympathy for those dark heroes who were able to be at the same time nihilists, secret police agents and anarchists and were misusing public money, libraries and other properties in the worst possible way. Instead of becoming friends with the French, the Germans and the English, who were always impeccable in their entertainment and work; instead imbuing themselves with their spirit of decency, diligence, honesty and courtesy; they were finding their ideal in the Jews or the Greeks or some of the Armenians, who were all exploiting in the meanest way their resources and energy and were involved in their milieu of malicious, crude and vain conversation. Later I learned that in this city there were other Bulgarians who did not visit that cafe and were doing their studies in the most serious way.

One day in the midst of a heated game of *trenta una*, when the Argentinean had lost about 100 francs, entered a person with cocked fur cap, with a stick under his arm and two saddlebags.

"O-o! Bay Ganyo! Welcome!" shouted the whole company.

"Good day! How are you?" answered the newcomer and generously declining the kind offers to take a seat at their tables, he came and sat at my table, and while sitting, he spilled my coffee. Crude character!

"*Purdon!*"

"It is all right, don't worry," I hurried to answer, although I noticed that he was not worried all that much.

"A-a, are you Bulgarian? Well, good afternoon, if that is so! Ganyo Balkanski! Where do you come from, your Honor?"

I told him. We introduced ourselves.

"With this damned rose oil I travel around the world," said Bay Ganyo in a desperate tone.

"Why? Isn't that trade successful?"

"Well, I should tell you the truth, Sir, it is not!"

"But why?"

"Why! We suffer from our heads. Once, when you said Bulgarian oil, they would run like wasps onto honey! You enter a drug store and should you manage to say that you are Bulgarian before even saying "Bonjour," he will

ask “Essence de rose” with an ironic smile. Well, who pays attention to the sniggering if they are buying? But they do not want anything! He will say to give him a gram as a sample. He is mocking you! How are you able to give him a gram? You will pour one gram and waste two. But “My friend,” I say, “that oil is not what you think, this is pure oil.” He will answer, “Well, this is what you all say, this is what you repeat all the time.” He will say this directly and he does not even wish to speak to you. It is always this fake plant oil, damn it! ... The Anatolians caused all this trouble! They are not but one or two souls. They are all over Europe, in crowds: Anatolians, Armenians, Turks, Greeks and all of them cheat and lie to the world, that one they burned, those they fooled! When you smell them of rose oil, they make as if nothing has happened!

The *innocent* East appeared clear to me with all its beauties. The clattering of backgammon and the flapping of cards on all the tables around us made that image complete—incredible noise and smoke! [...]

“Hey, garçon! *Une* café,” shouted Bay Ganyo.

“Monsieur!” responded the quick garçon.

“*Une* café et apporte gazette Bulgare,” ordered Bay Ganyo and, addressing me, added, “I did not forget those whoresons the French.”

The garçon served him his coffee and a dirty cover to which were attached several Bulgarian newspapers with torn edges.

“Let’s see what the news is, what is happening around the world,” said Bay Ganyo, opening the covers and diving into the politics. I observed from the side how he was eagerly and with pleasure reading the paragraphs, smiling and with shining eyes saying now and then “bravo!” At one moment full with admiration he turned to me, “What a mess they made! Listen, I will read to you...”

“Excuse me Mister Balkanski, at least here I do not want to hear about *those politics*,” I said and I got up from my chair, “Farewell!”

“No, hear just this: “That gang of bandits, procurers, robbers and base persons who get involved in filthy business...” Wait, this is even better!...”

“No, no! Farewell, Mister Balkanski,” I shouted decisively and walked out.

Translated by Alena Alexandrova

ION LUCA CARAGIALE: RROMANIAN MAN AND RROMANIAN WOMAN

Title: *Rromânul/Rromânca* (Rromanian man and Rromanian woman)

Originally published: *Rromânul* was published under the title ‘Moftangiu!’ in *Moftul român*, no. III (3 February 1893), p. 1. *Rromânca*, was published under the title ‘Moftangioica’ in *Moftul român*, no. V (11 February 1893), p. 1.

Language: Romanian

The text used is from the original

About the author

Ion Luca Caragiale [1852, Haimanale (near Ploiești) – 1912, Berlin]: playwright and literary critic. The son of a lawyer, Caragiale completed primary and secondary education in Ploiești. After graduating, he worked in his uncle’s theatre company. In 1870, he participated in a republican revolt in Ploiești. After its suppression, Caragiale went to Bucharest to study law. In 1874, he published his first poetry in *Revista contemporană* (Contemporary review). In 1877, he began working for *Țimpul* (The Time), one of the most important newspapers of the time. In the same year, Caragiale published *Almanah hazliu și popular* (Humorous and popular almanac) and had his first play staged by Nottara Theatre in Bucharest. It was in this period that Caragiale was introduced to the *Junimea* circle, where he recited some of his plays. From 1881 to 1884, Caragiale was a school-inspector, but continued to write plays and publish political articles. Being accused of ‘immorality’ and national denigration, he was repeatedly overlooked for awards by the Romanian Academy. In 1893, Caragiale founded *Moftul român* (Romanian caprice), and in 1894, together with novelist Ioan Slavici (1848–1925) and the poet, translator and journalist George Coșbuc (1866–1918), he edited the journal *Vatra* (The Fireplace). From 1893 to 1902, Caragiale worked as a brewer and opened several pubs in Bucharest. In 1902, Caragiale was again refused an award by the Romanian Academy. Dimitrie A. Sturdza (1833–1914), one of the influential members of the committee and president of the Romanian Academy between 1882 and 1884, accused his works of denigrating ‘national values’. From 1904 until his death in 1912, he lived in self-imposed exile in Berlin. Caragiale occupies a controversial place in the Romanian national canon. During the interwar period, some literary critics, including literary critic and journalist George Călinescu (1899–1965), continued the earlier categorization of Caragiale as ‘non-Romanian’, and criticized him for allegedly failing to identify with Romanian national ethos; others, however, like the Romanian-born French playwright Eugen

Ionescu (1909–1994), extolled his literary qualities. This form of criticism was partially abandoned during the communist era, when Caragiale's plays were revered as the most subtle indictment of the decadent Romanian bourgeoisie of the late nineteenth century. After 1989, Caragiale was finally recognized as the greatest Romanian playwright of all times, and his cultural satires and critiques were fully integrated within their proper political and cultural context.

Main works: *Teatru* [Theatre] (1889); *Note și schițe* [Notes and sketches] (1892); *Momente* [Moments] (1901); *Schițe nouă* [New sketches] (1910); *Novele, povestiri: Opere complete* [Novels, stories: the complete works] (1914).

Context

During the nineteenth century, Romanian culture experienced a number of transformations, all originating in the search for cultural models among the 'great' European cultures and in the difficulty in adopting those models to local Romanian realities. The French intellectual and political model was among the most enduring in Romanian culture. This emulation was reinforced by the fact that Romanians spoke a Romance language and that they were, especially after the revolution of 1848 and the creation of the Romanian state in 1866, overtly importing the French political tradition. This process did not, however, eradicate the main tenets of Romanian culture and society which were traditional, rural, and connected to their regional experience. Since the nineteenth century, Romanian intellectuals had been painfully aware that the discrepancy between the cultural models shared by the educated elite and those characterizing the rest of society was the source of both the progress and backwardness of Romania. The internalization of these two opposing types of identity representation developed into two different forms of cultural and political criticism, one insisting on the universality of Romanian culture, the other on its local and regional nature.

Mihai Eminescu for example, produced a literary representation of the local type of identity, and virulently criticized the universal. Caragiale, on the other hand, offered a negative diagnosis of Romanian society without separating the two types. His plays are a merciless mirror of Romanian society of the time, standing out in their criticism of political obsession and the lack of morality, ridiculing the contradiction between effective obscurity and pretensions as well as the deformation of the Romanian language through the adoption of French. Many of the modern manners adopted by Romanians were, according to him, false and superficial. As such, his cultural critique was essentially urban. Caragiale did not satirize the essence of the Romanian na-

tional character (the peasant for example), but the new social product of modernity: the shallow individual, the new economic and political oligarchy. Neither was his satire gender oriented, as he equally demystified both male and female behavior. His comedies also criticized the provinciality of political life in Romania. Further, his ideas about politics were vividly expressed in a number of articles Caragiale contributed to various conservative journals.

These texts, which never became part of the national canon, attempted to offer a fine analysis of the Romanian national character. In a unique style, Caragiale exposed what he deemed as the negative attributes of the Romanians: false patriotism, flamboyant nationalism, and sham intellectualism. Undoubtedly, Caragiale's depiction of the Romanian character was to some extent cynical, and he consciously exaggerated most of the features attributed to the trifier. Despite this, however, these characterizations did not differ from his general observations of the human condition in Romania, which abounded in his satirical plays. Ultimately, Caragiale's caricatured account of the Romanian trifier brought to light the contradiction between social obscurity and cultural pretensions as well as between political obsession and lack of moral principles, distinctive features that he identified in many of his contemporaries. Far from linking Romanian national character to the rural communities, Caragiale focused exclusively on urban Romania, and pointed out that there was a strong connection between urbanization and the individuals he depicted in his texts. Like his other fictional characters, the Romanian trifier, personified, in fact, Caragiale's dissatisfaction with the superficiality of the Romanian culture, allegedly modernized, but in many ways exhibiting a distorted combination of Romanian traditions and Western, especially French, cultural styles.

Both acclaimed and disputed, many of Caragiale's writings, especially his comedies 'A stormy night', 'A lost letter', and 'At the carnival', became classic texts of the Romanian literary canon. Like his comedies, his satirical short stories 'Moments', provided many of the descriptions used by the Romanians in their critical self-identification. Since his death, Caragiale's accurate depictions of the mutant nature of modernity have resurfaced in both the scholarly work and public debates in Romania. Although the adaptation of some of his plays, especially by film directors, was banned during the 1980s, after the collapse of communism, Caragiale was reinstated in his position as one of the greatest literary figures of modern Romania.

Romanian man

The trifler is eminently Romanian; despite this, before being Romanian, he is first of all a trifler. Born into a poor, but honest, family, he is the offspring of his works, and therefore although a democrat by birth, he belongs to the aristocracy of intelligence, merit, science, art, culture, etc. But ... born into an old family of genuine boyars, who have always known how to place the interests of the country above the interests of the class, giving up privileges, the pure breed aristocrat is the true democrat... The trifler is definitely a patriot, an exclusive nationalist, a Romanian to the bottom of his heart! Everyone must know it!

A supporter of the government, or when that is impossible, a member of the opposition, the trifler congratulates Romania in the first case, and cries over it in the second, and in both he loves her madly. That is why he hates everything that is not Romanian, which is not national.

He respects agriculture, but dreams of a large national industry that would rid us of the tribute that we pay to foreigners: what really scares him is Romania's conquest in the economic field by the infamous foreigners, assisted by the foster children of his dear country!

He is a party member, as long as it comes only to home politics. As soon as it comes to representing us in front of foreigners, he believes that all Romanians should forget about their tiny passions and, holding hands in a brotherly manner, step united to face the economic, political, social and cultural danger threatening the Nation! The common enemy is the foreigner! Death to Foreignism! Long live Romanianism!

Whoever thinks differently ... is a traitor!

The trifler is to be found in all social classes; his species moves in all but a few channels of communication with a free ticket and is embedded everywhere, from the grandest palaces to the most modest room of a *hotel garni*.¹

The trifler may or may not have a profession, he may be rich or poor, stupid or smart, dumb or bright, young, old, of one sex or another, or of both, he was, has been and always will be a genuine Romanian ... God forbid anyone from attacking his Romania however remotely, for the Romanian trifler is here ready to crush them.

The Romanian trifler is:

Between primary school and the baccalaureate—an anarchist

From the baccalaureate to the first examinations at college—a socialist

¹ *Fr.* hotel with furnished rooms.

From the first examination to the final examination—a progressive

From the first job to pension—a conservative

From pension onwards he shares the principles of the college youth ... make sure to find him whenever there is a more or less political or impolite demonstration of the more or less Romanian students!

Romanian woman

Daughter of a tenant, a merchant, a clerk, a lawyer, an officer, a priest—whether papa was a Bulgarian, a Serb or a Greek—the Romanian she-trifler is consequently noble, *et par consequent*² she cannot stand churlish peasants.

She is a patron on the committee of several Romanian philanthropic or national culture societies.

The Romanian she-trifler speaks Romanian only *avec les domestiques*,³ apart from this she speaks French—and now she is studying English. Every day, the she-trifler turns entire stores upside down and inside out, from the highest shelf to the lowest, looking for samples, and, *malheureusement*,⁴ never finding what she needs. Rich as well as poor, often, out of absent-mindedness, when the storekeeper is not looking, she happens to drop something into her mitten or under her mantle. The she-trifler always has her carriage stop across the road. In her opinion, there are only two cities where someone can live: *Paris et Bukarest!*

She has one or more admirers, not out of pleasure or passion, but rather out of duty: such a high society lady has to have a *suivez-moi*.⁵ If she is rich, there is no greater pleasure for her but show her garments to her poor lady-friends, and to advise them of their fabulous price, and then of the budget plan for her future garments. The poor she-trifler is very discreet; therefore, she does not despise secret funds, quite on the contrary. For plotters, it is advisable to avoid the Romanian she-trifler. If green, that is to say unripe, she receives gifts from rich man; if rich she gives gifts to her poor nephews; that is to the green youth: "Oh! You green creature!"

When it comes to the list of her "victims," the Romanian she-trifler forgets their line, their names and their data; however, in this respect, when it comes to her lady-friends, her memory is prodigious.

² *Fr.* and therefore.

³ *Fr.* with the servants.

⁴ *Fr.* unfortunately.

⁵ *Fr.* accompaniment.

When you want to flirt with the she-trifler, she rushes you and grumbles. If you talk to her in earnest, she laughs, and jokes; if you joke, she is dead serious; if you greet her, she hardly mumbles thing; if you love her, she gives you away. [...]

The she-trifler is a brave Romanian woman: she knows how to endure, with the determination and bravery so characteristic of the Romanians, the torture of classical music concerts, *fort en vogue*⁶ nowadays ... Thus, if you like music, stay away from those concerts: whenever the orchestra plays a pianissimo, the she-trifler *commencera a causer fortissimo*...⁷

In general, the she-trifler has stomachaches; whenever she goes out in the evening, she will starve all day long to get into her corset. Therefore, it is wise not to ask her for a waltz; her breath reminds you regretfully of the smell of Parma violets.

Invited or uninvited, she has to attend all the prescribed balls, at the court, at societies, in the grand world, premiers, whether extraordinary or festive. [...]

Each she-trifler will happily tell you in great detail the conversation that she had with the heiress princess “for almost half an hour” at the last ball in Cotroceni. Imagine the number of she-triflers that went to the ball—for none was missing!—and figure out how many half hours that wonderful ball must have lasted. If you ask a pompously dressed she-trifler—about seven times more pompously than her spouse’s means could pay for—what she thinks about the princess, she will say, “Well, *mon cher*, I have to admit, she is young and quite pretty, *si vous voulez*,⁸ but she is ... too luxurious! [...]

The top of ambition—a minister for a husband and a secretary for a gentleman friend. Oh, and I almost forgot... When you see two she-triflers mixing their lipstick and kissing each other with extra warmth, you should know they cannot stand each other.

“*Ah, ma chere, je ne puis la sentir!*”⁹

Translated by Mária Kovács

⁶ *Fr.* very fashionable.

⁷ *Fr.* Will start speaking very loudly.

⁸ *Fr.* If you wish.

⁹ *Fr.* “Of, dear, I cannot stand her!”

ALEXANDROS PAPADIAMANTIS: EASTER CHANTER

Title: *Λαμπριάτικος Ψάλτης* (Easter chanter)

Originally published: newspaper *Ἀκρόπολις*, 1893

Language: Greek

The excerpt used is from Panayotis Moullas, *Α. Παπαδιαμάντης Αυτοβιογραφούμενος* (Athens: Εστία 1999), pp. 100–103.

About the author

Alexandros Papadiamantis: [Skiathos (central Greece) 1851 – Skiathos 1911]: short story writer and translator. He was the third son of the priest Adamantios, hence the family name (papa-Diamantis). His mother was the offspring of a well-off family from the Peloponnese. His father was very much influenced by the teaching of Kolyvades, a very conservative version of Orthodoxy. Alexandros accompanied his father to religious ceremonies, an experience which marked his life. He received his primary education in his hometown, at the Aegean island of Skiathos. Later, he left for Athens, where he graduated from the *Varvakion* school. In 1874, he enrolled at the School of Philosophy at the University of Athens but he never graduated. From a very young age, he learned English and French on his own, to such a perfection that his later translations of foreign novels were of the highest quality. In 1876, he used his studies as a pretext not to return to Skiathos. From 1882 to 1898, he worked as a translator for the first Athenian daily *Ἐφημερίς* (Newspaper) edited by the well-known playwright Dimitrios Koromilas (1850–1898). In 1884, he started working for the most popular newspaper of the time, *Ἀκρόπολις* (Akropolis), edited by the most prominent journalist of the period Vlassis Gavrilidis (1848–1920). Papadiamantis enjoyed great success: every time he published a short story, it was considered a literary event. In 1895, however, his father died and Alexandros began visiting his hometown Skiathos more often. In 1902, he finally retired there and wrote his most famous novel *Ἡ φόνισσα* (The murder woman). His religious sentiments made him abstain from social gatherings, hence his nickname *Κοσμοκαλόγερος* (A monk within society). A figure of a stoic and humble outlook, Papadiamantis always preferred to make friends with poor people, among whom he felt more at ease than within the literary circles. It was his religious spirituality that also moved him towards short story writing. He argued that this genre was much closer to his personality as an introvert and self-sufficient man, attached to religious worship and Byzantine liturgy. A few years before his death, Papadiamantis had already gained the reputation he deserved. His contribution is appreciated by diverse audiences, ranging from religious circles to leftist intellectuals. During the last two

decades, a series of studies have focused on the psychoanalytic dimension of his work. At the same time, his name has been turned into an instrument of touristic propaganda by the inhabitants of Skiathos, whose island is now publicized as ‘the island of Papadiamantis’.

Main works: *Ἡ Μετανάστις* [The immigrant] (1882) *Οἱ Ἐμποροὶ τῶν Ἐθνῶν* [The Merchants of Nations] (1883); *Ἡ γυψοπούλα* [The gypsy girl] (1884); *Ὀνειρο στοῦ κύμα* [Dream on the waves] (1900) *Ἡ φόνισσα* [The woman killer], (1904); he also translated *Ἐγκλημα καὶ Τιμωρία* [Crime and Punishment] by Dostoyevski (in installments 1888–1891).

Context

The 1880s was a period of political stability and economic growth. Harilaos Trikoupi (1832–1896), the prime minister for many years, had set out an ambitious program of social and financial modernization. However, after the world economic recession of the 1870s, which had also affected Greek society, thousands of people had gradually abandoned their hometowns and villages and had been squeezed into the miserable neighborhoods of the capital where they sought for a better future. In order to deal with the problem, Trikoupi's fiscal policy aimed at reinforcing agricultural production through protectionist measures. Yet, these measures did not hamper the wave of immigration to Athens and other cities of the Hellenic Kingdom. Moreover, the initiation of numerous construction projects (railways, channels, schools) offered new jobs to the unemployed, and, thus, accelerated urban population growth. This movement was also sustained by the first significant development of food manufacturing, especially of grape products, and also by the exploitation of mines. For the first time, Greece ceased to be an exclusively agricultural country and offered to its population new means of employment.

In intellectual terms, the press was a new and important factor in determining the novel trends in intellectual life. The increasingly literate Athenian public supported the publication of many newspapers, which publicized not only political issues but also intellectual debate. This public was eager to learn and follow new trends, especially those that originated from the West. The newspapers responded to this need, by attracting writers, sometimes on a fully professional basis, and using their talent in order to entertain and instruct their audience with stories short enough to appear on one or two pages, or in sequels. Writers, who, up to that point, had dealt only with historical novels shifted their interest. Figures such as Dimitrios Vikelas (1835–1908), a prominent publicist who also played a key role in the revival of the Olym-

pic games of 1896 in Athens and the Constantinopolitan novelist Georgios Vizyinos (1849–1896), developed the new genre. However, one of the basic features of these short stories was their exclusive interest in rural life and local traditions. This was connected both to the nostalgia, widespread particularly among lower class urban populations, for their place of origin, and also to the anxiety regarding the loss of the real essence of the nation which was intrinsically related to rural life. In fact, the Athenian press referred to diverse Greek regions, by way of formatting an ideal anthropogeography.

It is within this social and intellectual atmosphere that Papadiamantis composed his short stories. However, unlike his contemporaries, he insisted on depicting many of his stories with a strong religious color. The stories he wrote on Christmas and Easter constitute a large part of his work. The story 'Easter chanter' was written for the Easter of 1893. It is the story of a poor peasant from Skiathos, who accompanied the local priests as a chanter. The peasant had promised one of the priests that he would make it to a remote small church where a group of shepherds would gather to celebrate the night of Christ's resurrection. However, Papadiamantis, even before beginning his narration, made the effort to express his harsh criticism against those who despised Orthodoxy and religious stories, and those who tried to imitate western manners. In his view, these people were alienated from the essence of the nation, namely its customs and religion. A Greek does not have the right to be an atheist or a cosmopolitan, since he "then would resemble a dwarf who stands on his toes in order to look as tall as a giant."

Papadiamantis' attachment to Orthodoxy has been the basis of a significant intellectual discourse regarding national identity and cultural tradition. During the last fifty years this discourse has been taken over by intellectuals who, despite significant differences among them, generally bear strong religious sentiments and are identified as neo-Orthodox. They argue for the originality of Greek popular culture, considering Orthodoxy as its indispensable component. Intellectuals such as Zisimos Lorentzatos, Stelios Ramfos, and Christos Giannaras perceive modern Greek history as an incessant conflict among the East and the West; a conflict that began with the Conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders, in 1204. Eventually, Constantinople fell under Ottoman rule, which was considered more tolerant towards the Orthodox than the Catholics. The supporters of neo-Orthodoxy today consider the creation of the modern Greek state as the triumph of the West against the East, and as the total enslavement of Hellenism which culminated with the accession of Greece into the European Union.

Easter Chanter

[...] Here then is the cause of their discomfort—and how naively do they confess it, do they externalize it. To be a guest in a kingly manner in the mansions of a great nobleman and not to drink a toast to the landlord! To enjoy (imperial hospitality and a memorable meal) and not express thanks to the host! But for the short stories I sometimes publish at Christmas or Easter, I was truly inspired by my memories and my feelings, which delight and move my own self—and perhaps a few select lovers of reading. And that this kind exists is proved by the fact that the two leading newspapers of the capital, as well as the one and only magazine, host seasonal short stories during those days. Besides, almost nowhere will you find that I have sought a forced position or plot in order to galvanize the reader's curiosity. Wherever mention is made of Greeks living in foreign lands returning after a long absence or sending letters with material solace to their loved ones, all this is based on reality, since all those who have lived in seaside and maritime locations in Greece know very well that, especially on the days preceding holidays, many Greeks living abroad, though usually appearing cold and encased in a hard outer shell, suddenly *remember* their loved ones, and either return home, or, if they are hampered by their sense of honor to visit their families pretending to be something they are not, it is not rare for them to write all kinds of tall tales to their elderly mothers and sisters. In other stories, mention is made of the social and familial customs related to the holidays, while in others the weak plot revolves around some modernizing and pernicious custom. What is so improbable about all this?

But most of the holiday short stories written by me have, if I may use the Latin term, *a priori*, such a subject matter, that is to say they are mostly religious. Where is the charm, I ask you, where is the power or originality in one's going to the trouble of describing in detail how a village priest went to celebrate mass in an isolated chapel for the benefit of a tiny community of peasants or shepherds, who and how many participated in the feast, and what were the mores of the celebrants? This would be totally worthless and low in the opinion of the critics. To write about an old man who murdered his wife on Christmas day—without either the reader or the author even suspecting why he murdered her—is lofty and grand in some people's estimation. After such a crime on this holy day, the subject is exhausted, and all the Christmas and Easter short stories should no longer see the light of day.

No religion, for God's sake! The Greek nation does not consist of Byzantines, do you understand? Modern-day Greeks are direct heirs of the ancients.

Then they too became civilized and prospered. They are in step with the other nations. Where is the poetry in writing that Christ "accepts the worship of the poor people" or that the poor priest "offered God a sacrifice of praise"? And in describing the interior of the small temple, with its sleepy oil-lamps and the blackened figures of the Saints all around! We don't understand these things. We want a short story which will be full of poetry, not prosaic reality. And how do you dare to write, while talking about Julian the Transgressor¹, nailed to the wall by Saint Merkourios's spear, such a blasphemous phrase: "Livid, the demented tyrant..." when a different writer, of a different caliber, having published a historical fantasy drama years ago, prefixed to it a truly *vulgar* foreword, through which he crudely reviled the religion of his fathers—there was no reason then for one to be scandalized, because that was the fad of the day. But you dare to express yourself with such irreverent language about that Julian, the so-called Transgressor or Apostate—your impudence surpasses every limit. And yet the wise censorer did not perceive that my phrase was *objective*, as they are wont to say—that is to say it rendered, through words, the painter's colors—or that any issue concerning the beliefs of the writer (who, nonetheless, does not deny that he shares the opinion of the Byzantine wall-painter) is completely redundant.

In order to bring this prologue to a close, we shall say in a word that: the modern-day nation did not advance, sadly, as much as they say it did. The Greek nation, or at least its enslaved part, is still far behind, while the part which is free cannot accelerate forward enough, without the whole being torn apart as it is already being torn apart, alas! The runner must wait for the one following, if he is to run safely; he who is free must help the prisoner or give him relief. The more time goes by, the more the free nation becomes, regrettably, unable to lend a hand to the enslaved nation. An Englishman, a German or a Frenchman can be a cosmopolitan or an anarchist or an atheist or whatever else. He has done his patriotic duty, he has built a great homeland. Now he is free to occupy himself, for the sake of luxury, with infidelity and pessimism. But a modern-day Graeculus² who wishes to publicly be an atheist or a cosmopolitan, resembles a dwarf standing on tiptoe and stretching to become taller or to appear as a giant. The Greek nation, the enslaved nation, but the free one no less, has and will forever have the need for its religion.

¹ Byzantine emperor (361–363 A.D.), who wished to suppress the Christian faith and resuscitate the ancient Greek religion.

² A diminutive of the term Greek/Grecian in Latin (Graecus) which is used in a contemptuous sense.

As for me, as long as I live and breathe and possess judiciousness, I will never cease, especially during these most resplendent days, to worshipfully praise my Christ, to lovingly describe nature and fondly illustrate the pure Greek mores. *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.* [...]

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

ÖMER SEYFEDDİN: PRIMO, THE TURKISH CHILD

Title: *Primo, Türk çocuğu* (Primo, the Turkish child)

Originally Published: The first part of the story ('How he was born') was published in *Genç kalemler*, Selanik, 1911. The second part ('How he died') was published in *Türk sözü*, İstanbul, 1914.

Language: Ottoman Turkish

The excerpts used are from a 1970 edition of collected stories: Ömer Seyfettin, *Bomba – Bütün eserleri* (Ankara: Bilgi, 1970), pp. 7–15, 29–32, 34, 38, 39, 57–60, 71–74.

About the author

Ömer Seyfeddin [1884, Gönen, Balıkesir (northwest Anatolia, present-day Turkey) – 1920, İstanbul]: essayist and storywriter. The son of an Ottoman military officer from the Caucasus, he graduated from the military academy in İstanbul in 1903. Following the 1908 revolution, he served as an officer in Macedonia on missions against local guerillas. Later he resigned from the army and settled in Salonica (Gr. Thessaloniki) in pursuit of a literary career. A short life limited his active writing career to only nine years. Still, through his highly popular short stories and militant essays on literature and language, Ömer Seyfeddin became one of the most prominent names of the 'national literature' movement that set the stage for the emerging canon of modern Turkish literature in the following decades. He was highly inspired by the thought of **Ziya Gökalp**, the major ideologue of Turkish nationalism who also moved to Salonica following the 1908 revolution. Along with the latter, Seyfeddin launched the 'new language' movement, which demanded the establishment of Turkish as an 'independent' language, with a 'purified' vocabulary, grammar and syntax disposed of the Arabic and Persian elements ingrained in Ottoman Turkish. In 1911, collaborating with his friend Ali Canib, he started publishing the popular literary journal *Genç kalemler* (Young pens), in which he published his first short stories written in vernacular Turkish. Supported by the Committee of Union and Progress, the party that organized the constitutional revolution, the 'Young Pens' became a major site for advocating the agenda of linguistic Turkism. After 1911, he also published several articles and short stories in *Türk yurdu* (Turkish homeland), a journal published in İstanbul by one of the leading Turkists of the period, **Yusuf Akçura**. His short stories of the period underscored the strong Turkish presence in the Balkans. During the Balkan Wars, Ömer Seyfeddin re-enlisted in the army, and following the Ottoman defeat, was detained as a prisoner of war for ten months by the

Greek army. Later, he returned to Istanbul and stayed there during the First World War. While teaching literature at a high school, he wrote numerous short stories that glorified the heroic deeds of ordinary Turks in the past. Amidst the depressive atmosphere of the war, marked by recurrent defeats and humiliations, Ömer Seyfeddin's works mainly dwelled upon the military glories of the sixteenth century, the Ottoman 'golden age'. For him, the primary purpose of literary activity was the enhancement of national consciousness and self-pride among the reading public. Although he died young, Ömer Seyfeddin's employment of folk themes and his plain and unadorned style make him one of the pioneers of modern Turkish prose. His moralistic short stories have remained immensely popular and, thanks to the strong nationalist biases of official curricula, are still considered essential reading for schoolchildren today.

Main works: *Primo, Türk çocuğu* [Primo, the Turkish child] (1911); *Yarınki Turan devleti* [The Turanic state of tomorrow] (1914); *Ashab-ı kehfimiz, İctimai roman* [Our seven sleepers, a social novel] (1918); *Harem* (1918); *Yüksek ökçeler* [High heels] (1926); *Gizli mabed* [Hidden temple] (1926); *Bahar ve kelebekler* [Spring and the butterflies] (1927); *Bomba* [The bomb] (1938); *Beyaz lale* [The white tulip] (1938).

Context

The short stories of Ömer Seyfeddin, written between 1910 and 1920, read as a chronicle of Turkish nationalism as it evolved in its critical decade. Based in Salonica, the 'New Life' movement, of which the author was a part, aspired to awaken the Ottoman Turkish intelligentsia from what the group members termed the 'internationalist and humanist slumber', as well as from 'illusions of Ottomanism' engendered by the 1908 revolution. The year 1911 was a significant turning point in terms of the breeding of nationalist sentiment, as the Italian invasion of Tripolitania (Ottoman Libya) marked the beginning of ten years of incessant warfare and defeat for the Ottoman Empire. Ömer Seyfeddin's early stories very much reflect (and contribute to the shaping of) the bitter and reactionary nationalism of the Turkish speaking Muslim elite. Frustrated by the lack of national consciousness among Ottoman Turks, Ömer Seyfeddin contrasts them with the 'awakened' nations of the Balkans, displaying even a certain respect for the guerillas and the enemies against whom he fought in Macedonia and during the Balkan Wars.

Primo, Türk çocuğu, written on the eve of the Balkan Wars, vividly conveys the predominant mood of frustration and anger among the Ottoman Muslim elite in Salonica as it recounts a story of personal awakening taking place in the ferment of the struggle with the Italians in Libya. Similar to Ömer Seyfeddin's other narratives from the period, 'Primo' lavishes attention

on the rooted Ottoman presence in the Balkans and emphasizes the immanent threat of disintegration and complete annihilation facing the Muslim-Turkish populations in the region. The story narrates how the news of the Italian invasion of Tripolitania shatters the family of the suave and Europeanized engineer Kenan Bey. Kenan Bey, who lived with his Italian wife Grazia and his son Primo in Salonica, was a Freemason fully devoted to the cosmopolitan ideals of European civilization. The trauma of the colonial assault, augmented by the tensions building in the Balkans, has a profound transformative effect on Kenan Bey, who suddenly confronts the 'dark side' of European civilization and starts reconsidering his personal allegiances. Coming to terms with what Europeanization has cost him, he rediscovers, to the utter surprise and revulsion of his wife, his true Turkish identity. On the other hand, the protagonist of the story, Primo, who can barely utter a word of Turkish, is converted by a classmate named Orhan (the son of a pasha), who recounts to him stories of Ottoman heroism and glory. In the end, overtaken by patriotic zeal following the outbreak of the Balkan War and the occupation of Salonica by Greek forces, the child decides to sacrifice his life for the defense of the national cause in the region.

Primo and Kenan Bey's sudden 'discovery' of their national roots, their acute sense of belatedness, anger and shame, their unreserved contempt and jealousy towards the 'dissenting' non-Muslims, as well as their rising anxiety over imperial dissolution, are all highly emblematic of the quandaries of the younger generation of Ottomans living in the final decade of the Empire. The story also demonstrates how this overwhelming mood of desperation engenders a rising predilection for fetishizing violence, along with an obsessive yearning for heroism and for the restoration of Ottoman (or Turkish) power and glory. Ömer Seyfeddin is among the earliest Ottoman authors who employed representations of 'Turkish race and character' as dominant literary tropes. Since national characteristics are considered to be innate to every Turk, once Primo and his father ascertain their true identity, they immediately revert (from their lifelong cosmopolitan relapse) to the unsullied cultural essence of their original nationality and turn into zealous national heroes. The heroes' 'enhanced' state of national consciousness is marked above all by an extreme sense of intolerance towards all non-Muslim Ottomans as well as Europeans. Highly indicative of the mounting xenophobic mood of the period, the non-Muslims are represented en bloc as anti-Turkish nationals, traitors and enemies who deserve, in the end, to be crushed and duly eradicated (the historical model evoked here is Attila the Hun, under the authority of whom all Europeans "wailed like dogs"). Ömer Seyfeddin's char-

acterization of the minorities as potential collaborators and enemies becomes an enduring trope in Turkish nationalist literature, especially in the days following the partition of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. His stories have also contributed significantly to the shaping of a dominant undercurrent within the Turkish national psyche: a collective vision about the solitary but upright existence of the Turkish nation, forever withstanding the undue aggression of multiple enemies, both from within and without.

FS–AE

Primo, the Turkish child

I. How he was born

Under the starless sky of a chilly and dark September night, desperate and anguished Salonica sleeps motionless, as if weary of the demonstrations, the excitement, and the clamor of the day.

The docks are quiet... the lights of the Olympos Palace, Kristal, Splendid Palace and the other small night clubs are all out. The bells of the Catholic church, dominant and assertive, strike three. With frantic harmony, their glutinous roars penetrate the dark. Slowing down at times, or suddenly enthusiastic, the rumbles float over the worriless Jewish districts, reveling in their golden dreams of wealth and profit. Then, the echoes rise all the way up, reaching the extensive and dense rooftops of the bold and taciturn Turkish district [...]. Further down, beyond the stones piled up for the construction of a tram line, in front of the stairway to the sea, stands a solid and motionless shadow [...]. The poor and pensive figure in question is the highly respected young engineer Kenan Bey [...]. Among foreign and Levantine circles, he is much admired for his suave manners, his politesse and elegance. He is known for his ease with European manners, as well as for his abhorrence of Turkishness, considered synonymous with uncivilized fanaticism and sheer savagery. Having completed his education in Paris, Kenan Bey returned to his motherland about ten or eleven years ago. Like all others coming back from Paris, he found a well-paying job in Izmir and married a beautiful Italian girl. [...]

Tonight, Kenan Bey could not decide what to do! [...] With vigilant steps, he reached the shore. Deliriously, as if walking in his sleep, he asked himself repeatedly: "How could this happen? How could this happen?" He could not believe what he had heard and saw today, or the reports that he had read in

the newspapers [...]. Into the twentieth century, when one would expect the universal acknowledgment of the rights of all individuals, communities, states and nations, how was such a brutish assault possible? What a shameless crime! [...]

"Oh, the Europeans, who serve the cause of humanity!" he grumbled.

He started reconsidering some activities of the Europeans to which he had previously not attached any importance, or had even deemed normal. At first, he considered France. The nation that had always been the vociferous defender of virtue and humanity has been soaking Africa in blood for a hundred years, killing the unarmed, pure, innocent, warm, gracious and noble children of the Sahara with her machine guns, destroying quiet towns and peaceful homes with her blazing cannons, enslaving whole nations that have done no wrong, taking away their country, property, obliterating their honor, their lives and souls [...]. These savage, merciless and formidable Europeans. Completely taking over unarmed Africa, they also shared out Asia, cold-heartedly referring to this intrusion as the "Eastern question." They refused to consider the millions of [subjugated] men as human beings, and treated them as if they were lower than animals ... Russia intruded on Turkish land with unimaginable cruelty. Joining forces with England, she is determined to erase ruined Iran from the map of the earth, hoping to exterminate an ancient nation with three thousand years of history. The partition of Turkey is also imminent! For she is considered an obstacle to the pillage of Asia. [...]

[Kenan Bey] conceded that all his life he had been fooled by false and rotten ideas. The denial of ethnic and national feelings, the dreams of "internationalism and masonry"—all these were so ridiculous and foolish that they would make any man with the slightest capacity of thought break into tears. Unwillingly asking himself who he was, Kenan Bey could not bring himself to say "I am Turkish." He felt like crying out of shame and anger, and realized that until then, he had lived as a worthless corpse carrying an enslaved soul. He merely was an obedient servant, a petty slave possessed by the Europeans, who were in complete agreement on the need to wipe out the Turks from the face of the earth. [...]

[Exasperated, Kenan Bey spends the night in a hotel. In the morning he goes back home, and finds his wife, Grazia, packed up and ready to leave.]

Grazia has their passports ready. She asks:

- "When are we leaving Kenan? Tomorrow?
- Leaving for where?

– Egypt, Istanbul or Italy. [...]"

Kenan turns aside. Looking out the window, he says:

– "I am not going anywhere."

Grazia cannot believe him:

– "What? Are you staying in Salonica? [...]"

At that moment Primo comes in, walking slowly, pensive and pale [...] with a deep look in his eyes, as if he were gazing into the distance. His mother deems it inappropriate to argue in his presence. In a stern and angry tone, she says:

– "Go out Primo, this is a private conversation."

The child does not object. He leaves without a word, leaving behind his father, an ashen face, and his mother, whose lips are shaking as she takes out her gloves. So, this was what it came to. Primo knew this was coming. He reflected upon the events of the previous day. He hadn't gone to school that day. He went fishing with the Greek boys he had met at the Union Garden [...]. [Later] he saw his classmate Orhan in front of the summer theater, reading a newspaper with another Turkish boy, a bit older than him. Orhan called him over. He was the son of a Turkish pasha; a dominant character among his friends, never afraid of the *frères* at school [...]. Primo did not know any Turkish. Orhan had to speak in French. He translated to him what he held in his hands; the Young Turk Declaration. He told Primo that Turks and Italians were now at war. He became more intense as he spoke: Turks were the bravest, noblest and strongest nation in the world. For centuries, they ruled over Asia. Attila had crushed Europe, making them wail like dogs. The Turks had cleared the path of civilization, spreading [the seeds of] heroism, pure blood, unblemished morals and innovation everywhere they went, acting as instigators of natural selection. The greatest government of the world was founded by Chingiz Khan, and a small group of people descending from the grand Chingizid line destroyed the Eastern Roman Empire, that is Byzantium, took over Anatolia, united the various Turkish elements and marched as far as the gates of Vienna. Today, the entirety of Europe attacked the Ottoman Turks, striving to annihilate the ones who used to edify Europe. But surely, they would not succeed. [...]

Primo was standing in front of the door, with his hands in his trouser pockets, his big, hazel eyes fixed on the floor, pondering his memories of the day before [...]. His mother had ordered him out while talking to his father [...]. Was he a dirty fly that only annoyed her? No, he was not a dirty fly; he was as brave and heroic as those Turks Orhan talked about, the ones who used to rule over Europe and Asia. A Turk that belonged to the race of ever-

ruling kings, lords, khans and emirs could not be thrown out. How could his mother dare to do that! [...]

Suddenly, he heard his mother calling:

– “Primo, come in! [...]”

His mother was standing next to the table. His father had not moved from the armchair at all. They both looked pale. His mother wanted to embrace him. Primo refused with enormous gravity:

– “Slow down.”

He raised his hand like a miniature tragedy actor. Grazia froze, with the commanding manner of this child who had transformed so suddenly. She felt unable to breathe. Primo sat on the armchair next to his father, just like a grown up man. He placed his head on the palm of his hand, and with a strange French accent he said:

– “What is it? Why did you call me?”

He did not speak in Italian. Grazia was unable to utter a word. Was this a nightmare? [...] Kenan dared to interrupt the silence that grew heavier with time. Looking down, he said:

– “My child, you know that there is a war. Your mother and I are breaking up. Do you want to stay here with me and be a Turk? Or do you want to go to Italy with your mother and be an Italian.”

Abruptly, Primo jumped off from his seat [...] and with quite broken Turkish, screamed from the top of his lungs:

– “Me... Turko Child... Me no Italiano. Me here, me child Turk.”

In pain and shock, Grazia collapsed on the nearby chair. Kenan could not believe his eyes and ears. Then, Primo grabbed a chair [...] and, violently, hurled it, shattering Victor Emmanuel’s picture on the wall. [...]

II. How he died

[Following the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the occupation of Salonica by the Greek forces.]

After having decided to kill himself, Primo felt a sweet and pleasant comfort come over him. It was as if his pain had abated. The school had been closed for a while. The Turks had fled, and all the buildings were occupied by the Greeks.

He had not planned his final hour yet. He went out and began to wander. Everything, every space had changed. Ah! The only thing that had not changed was our officers. They were entertaining their dirty and worthless

selves, which they had barely saved from the enemy after they had lost their troops, cannons, weapons, land, honor and property [...]. These petty officers were so ignorant about their nationality, they would even ask each other what “Turan” was. They knew next to nothing about Turkish history. Our enemies, on the other hand, pursued the ideals derived from their national spirit, and carried out the great duty given them by history; happily spilling blood for their traditions, their fatherland and their separated brothers. The Greeks sacrificed thousands of lives for the “Megalo Idea,” their great ideal [...]. The Bulgarians threw themselves into the line of fire, crying cheerfully: “Nashi, nashi, Tzarigrad, nashi,” declaring: “Istanbul will be ours, Istanbul is ours.”

But Turks... Turks have no idea, not even the smallest of aims [...]. Members of such a nation without a public and common will, conscience and spirit are chauvinistic, egotistic and arrogant. [...]

When [Primo] returned to the house, it was nearly dark [...]. As if ordering himself, he said, “Let’s sleep now.” Yes, he had to wake up early the next day [...]. He went downstairs. Washed his face. Came back to his room. He placed his revolver on his bosom. Pulled up the blanket. [...]

He slept, with many dreams. Misty and extraordinary dreams [...]. [He] walked in broad valleys filled with warm red blood, teeming with millions of enemy corpses [...]. [Then] from the east, from the land of Turan, a crescent rose in the azure sky... There was a tiny star inside it... Primo watched in awe... His feet were wet... he bent forward and saw that he was immersed in blood up to his knees ... This was it, the blood of the Turk’s enemies ... The blood turned into a huge lake... An endless crimson lake... reflecting the image of the crescent and the star in the sky... Ah, our flag comes to life; our real flag, the physical embodiment of our holy flag.

Translated by Şirin Güneşer and Ahmet Ersoy

ȘTEFAN ZELETIN: THE NATIONAL CHARACTER OF DONKEYS

Title: *Caracterul național al măgarilor* (The national character of donkeys)

Originally published: *Din Țara Măgarilor. Însemnări*, Bucharest, Agenția I. Brănișteanu, 1916

Language: Romanian.

The excerpts used are from Cristian Preda, ed., *Din Țara Măgarilor. Însemnări*, (Bucharest: Nemira, 1998), pp. 46–51.

About the author

Ștefan M. Zeletin (born **Ștefan Moțaș**) [1882, Burdusaci (Bacău county) – 1934, Bucharest]: economist and political theorist. His family belonged to the local free-peasantry. He studied at the lyceum in Bârlad and at the theological seminary in Roman. After graduating, he went on to study philosophy at the University of Iași (1906), and then continued his studies in Berlin (1907–1908), Sorbonne (1909–1910), Leipzig (1910) and, finally, Erlangen. In 1914 he received his doctorate in philosophy. He then returned to Romania and taught German at the lyceum in Bârlad. It was in this period that he published his first philosophical and literary works. In 1915, the first volume of *Evangelhia naturii* (The gospel of nature) was published in Iași, followed in 1916 by *Din țara măgarilor* (From the country of donkeys). The latter was only meant to be a chapter in a larger literary work, tentatively entitled *Metafizica dosului* (The metaphysics of the bottom), which was never accomplished. In 1920, Zeletin moved to Bucharest and worked as a German teacher. In 1925, he published his most important sociological work *Burghezia română* (Romanian bourgeoisie). In 1927, he became professor of philosophy at the University of Iași. Although politically Zeletin sympathized with the liberals (Vintilă Brătianu, preeminent member of the National Liberal Party, was a supporter of his theories), he became a member of the People's Party led by Marshal Averescu (1859–1938). In 1930 he became seriously ill and died shortly afterwards in 1934. Zeletin's theories of neo-liberalism were greatly appreciated during the 1930s and 1940s, but were completely marginalized after 1945. During the 1970s, Romanian sociology re-evaluated his contributions to theories of social development, by including him in various anthologies. It was, however, only after 1989 that his works were properly re-edited and his ideas gradually reintroduced in intellectual debates about political ideologies and national identity.

Main works: *Evanghelia naturii* [The gospel of nature] (1915); *Din țara măgarilor. Însemnări* [From the country of donkeys. Travel notes] (1916); *Burghezia română* [Romanian bourgeoisie] (1925); *Neoliberalismul* [Neo-liberalism] (1927); *Nirvana. Gânduri despre lume și viață* [Nirvana. Thoughts on the world and life] (1928).

Context

The Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 brought the countries of Southeast Europe, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece into direct contact, and not only militarily. It was also for the first time that territorial expansionism and the nation's ethnic boundaries were defined with respect to regional similarity and common historical past. One discipline in particular benefited from this new political development: the emerging discipline of ethnography, which actively engaged in producing narratives of belonging according to which the fluctuating ethnic loyalty of the region's heterogeneous population could be drawn into one national space to the detriment of others. If ethnography offered the necessary ingredients for an articulated discourse on the nation's neighbors to emerge, other forms of knowledge reversed the meaning of these cultural encounters in order to project new introspective analyses of one's national character. This is the strategy which Zeletin chose for his representation of the nature of the fictitious 'donkeys', a population living in the Balkans and bordering the Bulgarians.

When published in 1915, *Din Țara măgarilor* generated violent reactions. In a small note signed 'Someone who is not a Donkey', the historian **Nicolae Iorga** reacted angrily, if unfairly, to this little pamphlet. However, positive reactions existed as well. The book was rightfully praised as one of the most insightful analyses of Romanian society. In this respect, Zeletin was often compared to **Ion L. Caragiale**. Not only is their ironic, metaphorical style compatible, but Zeletin's book also follows, to some degree, Caragiale's reflections on Romanian society in general as well as its national characterology in particular. Yet, what makes Zeletin's text different from other texts on national identity is the allegoric form in which it portrays the Romanians. Allegory was a genre with a long political tradition in Romania. From this perspective, Zeletin is not a singular case. For example, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Dimitrie Cantemir, the enlightened prince of Moldavia, extensively used allegory to express his political views. If Zeletin's use of allegoric description and the tendency towards irony is comparable to that of Cantemir and Caragiale, his critique of Romanian society resembles the classical theory of 'forms without substance' of **Maiorescu**.

Din Țara măgarilor is a daring attempt to construct a national imagery that combines spatial and geographical references to the Balkans and its peoples with a Romanian cultural identity. Zeletin's analysis is both social and psychological, aiming not only to unveil the specificity of Romanians, but also to integrate them in a regional, if stereotypical, Balkan context. The parable is presented as follows. Disturbed by the tragic situation of the populations inhabiting the region between the Dniester and the Black Sea, the mighty gods of Olympus decided to intervene in favor of those mortals. One wise human, native of that 'doomed place', was sent to gather information about the situation, which he then presented to the Gods. They thus found out that those creatures populating that hopeless part of the world were very much like the 'noble creatures' known as Donkeys. The country of the Donkeys was barely known in the world, and it was mainly due to a 'social earthquake' (the peasant revolt of 1907) that gods and humans became aware of its existence.

There were donkeys living in the village and, naturally, there were donkeys living in the city. Then, the Donkeys' culture was presented, together with its constitutive elements. One of the pillars of Donkey culture was patriotism. It was crucial to understand the national character of the Donkeys in order to get a perfect sense of the particularities of these creatures. Zeletin ascribed two contradictory components to the Donkeys' 'highly-praised' character: one was humanity; the other their animal nature. In this context, Zeletin integrated the description of the Second Balkan War, especially the part involving Romania and Bulgaria. In one of the most interesting and humorous parts of the book, the Balkan Wars were presented as a fight between two communities of Donkeys disagreeing about a tip (the symbol of greed, avarice and depravity).

Ultimately, what Zeletin described in this text was that Romanian society was marred by ideological divisions and was consequently unable to fulfill its destiny in Europe, both individually as a nation and regionally, as part of the Balkans. To achieve this, he urged the Romanians to accept their condition, their 'donkeyhood', so that they could participate in the process of modernity by creating forms with historical and cultural substance. What was imperative, Zeletin insinuated, was that Romanian cultural and political elites evaluate critically their role in creating a dysfunctional country rather than pointing at the negative behavior of its neighbors. To this end, Zeletin assumed an intermediary position between the westernizers and the autochthonists, criticizing the cultural and civilizational divide they had created in a country which they both claimed to represent. He was equally critical of the

idealist patriotism extolled by the liberals and of pretentious traditionalism appealed to by the conservatives. Before becoming the theoretician of neo-liberalism, Zeletin absorbed different intellectual currents, and internalized many critical attitudes characterizing Romanian cultural establishment before the First World War. It was this ambivalent position that eventually infused his discussion of the Romanian national character with the indispensable empathy toward his subject, and allowed him to offer a cultural diagnosis to the problems of Romanian society at the time.

During the 1970s, Romanian sociology revived Zeletin as one of the most important social thinkers of the interwar period, although he was exclusively discussed as the theoretician of 'neo-liberalism'. It was only after 1990 that 'From the country of donkeys' was invoked as a text accurately describing Romanian identity dilemmas, while at the same time synthesizing much of the internal conflict between westernizers and autochthonists.

MT

The national character of donkeys

It is worth seeing what a wonderful national character has been developed by donkeys since the fruit of culture invaded their ancient land, like a heavenly manna. A genuinely new soul has been born under this welcome divine downpour, lying upon the old one, and pushing it more and more backward in the dark. There are two layers that make up the much-praised character that emerged and has reached a prolific stage under the bright rays of donkey culture. One is at the surface: it is the human layer under which the cultivated donkey hides; the other lies at the bottom of the heart, and it is the realm of dirt by which such an long-eared creature shines among the other beings. Out of the human surface come the donkey's words; out of the inner donkeyness spring its deeds.

They speak nicely in the land of donkeys. There are some—not few—of them whose lips pour words sweeter than honey. It gives you pleasure to hear them utter words of supreme wisdom and accuracy: how they caress your ears, comfort your thoughts, thrill your imagination and—swinging you on the light wings of their skilful words—lift you above your own self, above the everyday banal to a new and wonderful world. They lift you to those spheres of unmarred blue, where virtue reigns, even-handedness is employed, truth is sought and the enthralling rays of beauty quench your thirst. You return from their gatherings a new person: somewhat purer and with a more elevated soul. Indeed, when it comes to handling words so that they sound

beautiful and sweet, the donkey is hard to equal. But why should we still call it by this name? For in those grand moments when it dwells in the charmed garden where word flowers blossom, far from looking like a quadruped, it floats, surrounded by the purest and most genuine humanness, as if there were no creature as perfect as it in the world.

It is true, without being a great patriot and a fiery lover of donkey-kind, one's heart is filled with endless sorrow to see these wonderful masters of words renouncing with so much apparent ease their inner donkey-like reality. One wonders rightfully if, in their soul, the flicker of national conscience is so pale that they can deny with such insincerity the deepest features of their kind. Overlooking this pitiful meandering in words, one jumps with joy to see that at least in deeds they awaken from the dizziness of self-denial and reveal themselves in the full glory of their naked donkeyness. At such times, indeed, when confronted with the honest zeal of reaching the stage nature reserved for them, one can say with absolute moral content: *ecce asinus!*

Poor donkeys are unworthy, not interested in doing things, in chivalry and bravery, in valor for the sheer sake of it. In brief, they are not capable of making beauty for the sake of beauty. Between heaven and earth, there has been no animal as ill fitted to be the preacher of Ideas, to conduct divine sermons in the temple of the Ideal. Cowardly, uncaring, with a rotten conscience, the donkey needs a strong lever to pull him out of its insensitivity to all that is beautiful and noble and to set it in motion. What could be the charmed pearl whose magic spark can take even the donkey out of its innate cowardice and make it act? It is called a tip.

Indeed, without a tip there is no way to take one step in the long-eared creatures' realm. Thus, it has come to be known to foreigners by the nickname Tip-land. All donkeys take a tip, whether they need it or not, from the poorest little donkey to the richest big donkey. Common sense has it that the bigger the donkey, the fatter the tip. Whereas it is enough to tip a little donkey only a few shillings in order for it to see to what in its country is called a whim, a big donkey can only be enticed with hundreds of thousands, if not even more. However, it is not only gold and silver that are considered tips. Praise in the press—for the donkeys have their own donkey-like press; praise in meetings; somewhat less directly, an untouched young lady-donkey—such tips touch right upon the heart of a donkey.

When a donkey does not get a tip from others, it takes the tip by itself. This is why foreigners that know little of the donkey traditions are wrong. In this country, they say, everyone steals, regardless of who they are. It seems that its leaders compete against each other as to who steals the most. Thus,

thieving has become a genuine skill and the most skilled at it is, at the same time, the most respected among donkeys. Foreigners are badly mistaken! Donkeys do not steal, but in full awareness of their merit, each of them takes out of the community chest what they think they deserve. It is only natural that the bigger the donkey, the more outstanding its achievements, the fatter the tip it takes as a reward from the community. [...]

A few years ago, the donkeys had a fight with another kind of creature, known as the Bulgarians. Of course, the whole business revolved around a tip that the donkeys, as always, considered they had the right to ask. However, the Bulgarians, another rare species of donkeys, would not hear about it. Things were getting so serious that they were ready to move from words to hooves. And this was the thick of the problem. For, as they had not tried their hooves for a long time, the poor donkeys were at a loss: should they give up the tip that had caused so much anger, and live in peace? Should they get it at the expense of their dear blood? This dilemma was unresolved for close to half a year, when, in order to stop the torture of indecision, the poor quadrupeds banished the thought of any tip from their mind, and under the threat of death penalty, they forbade anyone to fume about it.

There was grief in the donkey nation, silent, stifled mourning. One of their ancient traditions, the oldest and the dearest, was threatened by extinction. It so happened that one of the most remarkable sons of the nation, the one who led the group of royal councilors, surpassed itself and engraved its name in the minds of its kind. Like Solon of Athens in the past, in similar circumstances, he grew mad and came to the country council, staring into space, and mumbling words about the Bulgarians and the tip. Those who attended felt unimaginable sorrow. So one misfortune is always followed by the next. Merciless destiny had robbed the country of this bright son exactly when he was needed most. But what wonder was this? For, while more and more painful eyes were looking upon him, like upon one who is lost forever, the head of the councilors swiftly climbed up on the tribune and said in a stentorian voice:

We want a tip!

Look here, dirty Bulgarian,
Don't you dare laugh at us again!
In place of all that you had to gain
As we were restful at our place,
While you fought the great fights,
We want a tip!

Our laziness had paid you off
While you climbed up Destiny's slope
To fight the pagan peoples
And now, when we would like a bone,
You kick us and leave us alone?
We want a tip!

All foreigners will learn of us
For what we say is sacred stuff
Our customs are too dear to us!
We can stand curses of any kind
We stand the yoke and harness, all
But want a tip!

To God you should pray loud and hard,
That we stay patient and just want
A tip and not your blood!
For if we did, then you could be
The Mighty God himself, and still
You will not get rid of us!

We will make ready our hooves
And meet its keen edge with your head
We will kick and kick and kick again
Until your right brain does come back
To tell you it is not a game
To give a tip!

All the donkey-kind stirred as though they had been electrocuted and, having sharpened their hooves for fight, they went against the tradition-destroyers, invading their battle-haunted country like waves of flood. And then the donkeys performed acts of bravery in the deserted valley of the enemy, their blood flowed in streams like never before. This battle will be marked as unique in the annals of the donkeys, a reason for permanent pride and nobleness for the generations to come. For of the donkey deeds that they engraved with golden letters in the nation's big book, this is for sure the most telling of donkeys.

The Bulgarians were shaken to the bottom of their heart, and they gave the tip! [...] Nowadays, the donkeys are faced with bitter hardships, as their an-

cestors never were, and their descendants will never be. The quake that overcame all the enlightened nations managed to shake even their secular donkeyness. Now and then, a keen thrill of nobleness pervades everyone in the country, a longing for bravery, for deeds on the altar of the Ideal. All of them, young and old, cross villages and towns, and their united voices cry out powerfully: To arms! Come, oh, thou brave ones, let us conquer what is to be conquered!

At such times, any truly donkey heart is broken and bleeding. It seems that only a small step is needed for those beings to impiously give up their nation and traditions, to be purged in the nobleness of valiant deeds, and to become truly entirely human. Repeatedly, as if lifted above them, overcome by a mad desire to clean their soul of mud in the foamy waves of bravery, the donkeys cry out in a coarse voice, “To arms!”

“Be at peace, brothers in donkeyness!”—top leader donkeys tell them at such times. Do you not see that the manger is not filled yet? Wait until our tip is complete, then we will set off to war like decent people. All the donkeys are convinced by this argument, which is *per excellentiam* donkey-like. And they wait. But the manger does not get filled, and the tip does not grow; the fire of chivalry that sparkled for one moment in their hairy chest goes out, and—thank God—they remain donkeys.

Translated by Mária Kovács

JAROSLAV HAŠEK: THE GOOD SOLDIER ŠVEJK

Title: *Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války* (The good soldier Švejk and his fortunes in the World War)

Original published: as a series of popular readings in Prague during 1921–1923

Language: Czech

The excerpts used are from: *The Good Soldier Švejk and his Fortunes in the World War*. Translated from Czech by Cecil Parrott (Middlesex: Penguin Books with W. Heinemann, 1983), pp. 67–73.

About the author

Jaroslav Hašek [1883, Prague – 1923, Lipnice near Německý Brod (after 1945 Havlíčkův Brod) (*Ger.* Deutschbrod)]: journalist and writer. Born into the family of a high school teacher, he studied at a commercial academy, and later led a bohemian and vagrant life wandering through Bohemia, Hungary and Galicia. He was jailed briefly for alleged anarchist activities in 1907. Later he worked as the editor in several special-interest journals such as *Ženský obzor* (Women's horizon) or *Svět zvířat* (Animal world), and simultaneously he published stories and interviews from the Prague underworld in various anarchist journals. Throughout his life he wrote several hundred humorous stories published in various journals and newspapers. In 1911, he founded the 'Party of Moderate Progress in the Limits of Law', a parody of party politics and the election process. In 1915, Hašek was mobilized and sent to the Galician front, let himself be captured and entered the Czechoslovak legions in Russia. In 1918, though, he entered the Bolshevik Party and joined the Red Army as a political commissioner. After coming back to Prague in December 1920, he again devoted his energy to writing short-stories, feuilletons, humoresques, theatre sketches and so on. He was a master of mystification games merging the realities of life, including his own, and literature. There are a number of legends, myths and non-confirmed stories about Hašek, to the fabrication of which he supposedly contributed a great deal. His most important piece of work, the one that made him world famous, is the *Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka*. It became not only part of the Western literary canon, but an indispensable part of Czech cultural memory. Hašek became a legend after his death. The communists, in particular, tried to appropriate his legacy after the Second World War and turn him into a true revolutionary, which, however, proved unsuccessful due to his essentially non-conformist, bohemian and deeply sarcastic personality and writings. Beyond the national horizon, his work is considered to be

highly representative of the turn-of-the-century deep existential irony and 'black humor' symbolizing the peculiar Central European cultural code of the time.

Main works: *Trampoty pana Tenkráta* [Troubles of Mr. Then] (1912); *Dobry voják Švejk a jiné podivné historky* [The good soldier Švejk and other queer stories] (1912); *Průvodčí cizinců a jiné satiry z cest i domova* [Foreigners' guide and other satires from travels and home] (1913); *Můj obchod se psy a jiné humoresky* [My dog-store and other humoresques] (1915); *Dobry voják Švejk v zajetí* [The good soldier Švejk in captivity] (1917); *Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války* [The good soldier Švejk and his fortunes in the World War] (1921–1923); *Črty, povídky a humoresky z cest* [Sketches, stories and humoresques from travels] (1955); *Dějiny strany mírného pokroku v mezích zákona* [History of the party of moderate progress in the limits of law] (1963), *Dekameron humoru a satiry* [The decameron of humor and satire] (1972).

Context

In the first years after 1918, war became one of the main themes in the arts and culture all over Europe. In the Czech case, an important part of the literature about the war was the 'legionary novel' (most notably those by Rudolf Medek, Josef Kopta, and František Langer) that depicted the Czechoslovak legions formed mainly from deserters and prisoners of war that fought against Germany and Austria-Hungary on the side of the Entente. The number of Czechoslovak legionaries and above all their significance in the fight against the Bolshevik revolution, especially after they occupied major parts of the trans-Siberian railway, contributed considerably to the international recognition of the idea of an independent Czechoslovak state during and after the war. As such they attracted much respect in the first Republic and, consequently, the officially supported 'legionary literature', looking backwards, appropriated their legacy and depicted them in a favorable way as patriotic fighters contributing to the founding of the state. In contrast to this type of writing, there were alternative ways of depicting the war, such as those of Jaromír John or Jaroslav Hašek. Generally they contrasted the two basic levels of the war. The first was the official one pertinent to the state apparatus, the dynasty and war-machinery that was depicted with irony and as a burlesque. The other was the level of the ordinary man, dealing with his emotions, feelings and ability to find his own way in the chaos of the war.

Hašek's experiences of the war and revolutionary Russia corroborated his deep mistrust of all great ideas that overreach the simple, everyday life. In his refusal of the 'higher order of things' projected in European culture throughout the centuries, and in his entertaining frivolousness, he was close to the Dadaist movement emerging during the same period. The figure of Švejk

also reminds the reader of the literary type of the 'cunning, simple man' rooted in picaresque novels such as the figures of Eulenspiegel, Simplicissimus or Sancho Panza. From a different perspective some aspects of the book's style are comparable to contemporaneous realism, expressionism or neoprimitivism. The truth is, however, that Hašek did not care much about high literature or recent literary trends after the war. It was Prague's proletarian Žižkov district with its pubs and small circle of bohemian artists and drunkards that was the matrix and immediate audience of Hašek's last years of writing.

Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka is a four-volume, unfinished novel-chronicle of strictly epic character. It has no central theme or continuous plot. The novel is constructed as a free series of scenes, conversations, and storytelling connected just by the central figure of Švejk. It is set first in Prague, then south Bohemia, Hungary and in the end, near the front-line in Galicia. One of the comic elements of the book is the use of language. Especially in dialogues, Hašek uses colloquial Czech including vulgarisms and slang neologisms, bureaucratic and military jargon, Austrian German, Hungarian, Polish as well as the language of academic writing and popular literature (almanacs). The other comic element is of course the figure of the earthly, unsophisticated Švejk himself. Sometimes he seems sly, sometimes dimwitted. With his unmatched zeal and absolute even-mindedness he often enrages his superiors and authorities. However, his destructive behavior *vis-à-vis* the war-machinery or state apparatus is rather involuntary and unconscious. From the literary point of view, Švejk is a hyperbolized, artistic construction. His character is never rendered in detail, his age and emotions are unknown and his opinions are sketched only very roughly.

Osudy was at first published in a series of popular readings that many book-sellers as well as literary critics rejected as too vulgar and simple. Among the first to appreciate the novel were writers such as the Czech Ivan Olbracht or the Prague Germans Alfred Fuchs and Max Brod. The latter introduced Hašek's novel to the German speaking world, which led to its later popularity throughout Europe. Švejk and other figures from the novel (the police agent Brettschneider, the innkeeper Palivec, the army priest Katz, the first lieutenant Lukáš and so forth) as well as many of the novel's scenes became a part of the Czech cultural idiom that was evoked in arts and culture as well as in everyday life. A significant, though controversial example might be the verb *švejkovat* (to act like Švejk), which, in an interesting contrast to the real literary figure, means to shirk or to make oneself silly out of passive resistance. Similarly controversial is, however, the very legacy of Hašek's

Švejk in Czech identity and literary canons. For many, *Osudy* is a first-class example of anti-war and anti-military literature (thus in line with authors such as Barbusse or Remarque) which reveals and denounces its anti-human character by ridiculing the war-machinery with all its bestialities. For others, Hašek's book trivializes the war and introduces a literature of 'pub stories' and a frivolous and exaggerated story-telling, without any inherent anti-war sentiment or humanist engagement. But, Švejk and *švejkovština* (Švejkness) triggered numerous clashes about the 'Czech national character' and its representation abroad. Here again quite independently of the literary model itself, Švejk stands for the 'typical Czech foxy pragmatism' allegedly neglecting higher ethical values or moral persuasions and thus Hašek has been criticized from all possible positions (including nationalist, liberal, socialist, Marxist, Roman Catholic). Others either defended the supposed 'Švejk's pragmatism' as the only possible way out of the awkward or paradoxical situation (Czechs fighting for the 'hated' Austria against a 'friendly Slavic nation', namely the Russians), or rejected altogether the reification of Švejk as irrelevant to the literary canon and to Czech reality.

MK

The good soldier Švejk and his fortunes in the World War

[...] The time for the doctor's afternoon round approached. Dr Grünstein went from bed to bed, followed by the medical orderly officer with his notebook.

"Macuna?"

"Present!"

"Enema and aspirin. Pokorný?"

"Present!"

"Stomach pump and quinine! Kovařík?"

"Present!"

"Enema and aspirin! Koťátko?"

"Present!"

"Stomach pump and quinine!"

And so it went on, one after the other, mercilessly, mechanically, briskly.

"Švejk?"

"Present!"

Dr Grünstein looked at the new acquisition.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Humbly report, I've got rheumatism!"

In the course of his practice Dr Grünstein had grown accustomed to be gently ironic, which was much more effective than shouting.

"Aha, rheumatism," he said to Švejk. "Then you've got a jolly serious illness. It's really a coincidence getting rheumatism just at a time when there is a world war on and you've got to go to the front. I think that you must be awfully sorry."

"Humbly report, sir, I am awfully sorry."

"Well, there you are, you see, he's awfully sorry. It's really awfully nice of you that with your rheumatism you've not forgotten us just at this particular moment. In peacetime a poor chap like him runs about like a young goat, but as soon as war breaks out he immediately gets rheumatism and suddenly his knees don't work. Your knees hurt, I suppose?"

"Humbly report, they do, sir."

"And you can't sleep a wink the whole night, can you? Rheumatism's very dangerous, painful and grave illness. We've already had good experience with rheumatics here. Strict diet and other treatment of ours have proved very effective. Here you'll be fit quicker than in Piešťany¹ and you'll march to the front like greased lightning."

Turning to the hospital orderly he said:

"Write this down: Švejk, strict diet, stomach pump twice a day, enema once a day, and we'll see how it goes after that. For the time being take him to the consulting room, pump his stomach and when he comes to, give him and enema, but a real good one, until he screams blue murder and his rheumatism gets frightened and runs away."

Then turning to all the beds the doctor made a speech full on noble and rational moral maxims: "Don't imagine that I'm just a bloody halfwit who swallows all your bull. Your tricks don't rattle me in the least. I know you're all malingerers and you want to desert from the war. And I'll treat you as such. I've survived hundreds and hundreds of soldiers like you. Masses of people have lain on beds here who had nothing wrong with them at all except that they hadn't got a soldier's guts. While their comrades were fighting on the battlefield they thought they'd lounge about in bed, get hospital rations and wait until the war flew by. But they all found they'd made a bloody mistake, and all of you'll find you've made a bloody mistake too. In twenty years time you'll be still screaming in your sleep, when you dream of how you tried it on with me."

"Humbly report, sir," came a gentle voice from the bed at the window, "I'm well again. I notice in the night that my asthma's gone."

¹ A famous spa in Slovakia for the treatment of rheumatism.

"Your name?"

"Kovařík. Humbly report, I have to have an enema."

"Good, you'll still get an enema for the road," Dr Grünstein decided, "so that you don't complain that we didn't give you treatment here. Now, all the patients whose names I've read out, fall in and follow the orderly, so that each can get what's due to him."

And each one got a handsome dose of what had been prescribed. And if any of them tried to work on those who were executing the orders by means of prayers or threats that they might too once join the medical corps and the executioners might fall into their hands, Švejk at least bore himself with steadfastness.

"Don't spare me," he invited the myrmidon who was giving him the enema. "Remember your oath. Even if it was your father or your own brother who was lying here, give him an enema without batting an eyelid. Try hard to think that Austria rests on these enemas and victory is ours."

The next day on his round Dr Grünstein asked Švejk how he was enjoying being in the military hospital.

Švejk answered that it was a fair and high-minded institution. In reward he received the same as the day before plus aspirin and three quinine powders which they dissolved into water so that he should drink them at once.

And not even Socrates drank his hemlock bowl with such composure as did Švejk his quinine, when Dr Grünstein was trying out on him all his various degrees of torture.

When they wrapped Švejk up in a wet sheet in the presence of the doctor his answer to the question how he liked it now was: "Humbly report, sir, it's like being in a swimming pool or at the seaside."

"Have you still got rheumatism?"

"Humbly report, sir, it doesn't seem to want to get better."

Švejk was subjected to new tortures.

At that time the widow of the infantry general, Baroness von Botzenheim, took great pains to find that soldier about whom *Bohémie* had recently published a report that, cripple as he was, he had had himself pushed in a bath chair shouting: "To Belgrade!"; which patriotic pronouncement induced the editorial staff of *Bohémie* to invite their reader to organize collections in aid of the loyal and heroic cripple.

Finally, after inquiries at police headquarters it was ascertained that the man in question was Švejk and after that it was easy to make a search for him. Baroness von Botzenheim went to the Hradčany taking with her her lady companion and her footman with a hamper.

The poor baroness had no idea what it meant for someone to be lying in the hospital of the garrison gaol. Her visiting card opened the prison door for her, in the office they were awfully nice to her, and in five minutes she learnt that "the good soldier Švejk," whom she was looking for, lay in the third hut, bed number seventeen. She was accompanied by Dr Grünstein himself, who was quite flabbergasted by it. [...]

"Everybody in bed! An archduchess is coming here. Don't anyone dare show his dirty legs outside the bed."

And not even an archduchess could have entered the ward with such dignity as did Baroness von Botzenheim. After her the whole suite poured in, including even the quartermaster sergeant-major of the hospital who saw in all this the mysterious hand of Accounts Control, which was going to tear him away from his fat feeding trough at the base and deliver him to the tender mercies of the shrapnel somewhere under the barbed wire posts.

He was pale, but Dr Grünstein was even paler. Before his eyes there danced the old baroness's small visiting card with her title, "Widow of a general," and everything which could be associated with it like connections, protection, complaints, transfer to the front and other frightful things.

"Here you have Švejk," he said, endeavoring to preserve an artificial composure and leading the Baroness von Botzenheim to Švejk's bed. "He behaves with great patience."

Baroness von Botzheim sat down on the chair prepared for her at Švejk's bed and said: "Tszech zoldier, goot zoldier, krippl—zoldier iss brafe zoldier. I lof fery moch Tszech Austrian."

At that she stroked Švejk on his unshaven cheeks and went on:

"I reat eferyzink in ze newspapers, I brink you yum yum, zomzink to bite, to shmoke, to zuck, Tszech zoldier, goot zoldier. Johann, come here!"

Her footman, whose bristly side-whiskers recalled the notorious killer Babinský, dragged a voluminous hamper to the bed, while the old baroness's companion, a tall lady with a tearful face, sat down on Švejk's bed and smoothed out his straw pillow under his back with the fixed idea that this was what ought to be done for sick heroes.

In the meantime the baroness drew presents out of the hamper: a dozen roast chickens wrapped up in pink silk paper and tied with a yellow and black silk ribbon, two bottles of a war liqueur with the label: "*Gott strafe England*"² On the back of the label was a picture of Franz Joseph and Wilhelm clasping hands as though they were going to play the nursery game: "Bunny

² May God punish England.

sat alone in his hole. Poor little bunny, what's wrong with you that you can't hop!"

Then she took out of the hamper three bottles of wine for the convalescent and two boxes of cigarettes. She set out everything elegantly on the empty bed next to Švejk's, where she also put a beautifully bound book, *Stories from the life of our Monarch*, which had been written by the present meritorious chief editor of our official *Czechoslovak Republic* who doted on old Franz. Packets of chocolate with the same inscription, "*Gott strafe England*," and again with pictures of the Austrian and German emperors, found their way to the bed. On the chocolate they were no longer clasping hands; each was acting on his own and turning his back to the other. There was a beautiful toothbrush with two rows of bristles and the inscription "*Viribus unitis*," so that anyone who cleaned his teeth should remember Austria. An elegant and extremely useful little gift for the front and the trenches was a manicure set. On the case was a picture showing shrapnel bursting and a man in a steel helmet rushing forward with fixed bayonet. And underneath it was written in German: "For God, Emperor and Fatherland!" There was a tin of biscuits without a picture on it but with a verse in German instead, together with a Czech translation on the back:

Austria, thou noble house,
Thy banners wide unfurl!
Thy flags shall flutter proud on high.
Austria shall never die!

The last gift was a white hyacinth in a flower—pot.

When all of this lay unpacked on the bed the Baroness von Botzenheim could not restrain her tears for emotion. Several famished malingerers felt their mouths water. The baroness's companion propped up the seated Švejk and wept too. There was a silence of the grave which was suddenly broken by Švejk who said with his hands clasped in prayer:

"Our father, which art in heaven, hallow be Thy name. Thy kingdom come ... Pardon me, your ladyship, it's not right. I mean to say: O God our father in heaven, bless for us these gifts that we may enjoy them thanks to Thy goodness. Amen."

After these words he took a chicken from the bed and starting to devour it under the horrified gaze of Dr Grünstein.

"Ach, how he enjoys it, poor soldier," the old baroness whispered enthusiastically to Dr Grünstein. "He's certainly well again and can go to the battlefield. I'm really very glad that my gifts stand him in such good stead."

Then she walked from bed to bed, distributing cigarettes and chocolate creams. When she came back again to Švejk after her promenade, she stroked his hair, said in German: "God protect you all!" and went out of the door with her whole escort.

Before Dr Grünstein could return from below, where he had gone see the baroness out, Švejk had distributed the chickens. They were bolted by the patients so quickly that Dr Grünstein found only a heap of bones gnawed cleanly, as though the chickens had fallen alive into a nest of vultures and the sun had been beating down on their gnawed bones for several months.

The war liqueur and the three bottles of wine had also disappeared. The packets of chocolate and the box of biscuits were likewise lost in the patients' stomachs. Someone had even drunk up the bottle of nail-polish which was in the manicure set and eaten the toothpaste which had been enclosed with the toothbrush.

Translated by Cecil Parrott in Jaroslav Hašek: *The Good Soldier Švejk and his Fortunes in the World War* (Penguin Books with W. Heinemann, 1983), pp. 67–73.

ROBERT MUSIL: THE MAN WITHOUT QUALITIES

Title: *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (The man without qualities)

Originally published: Berlin, Rowohlt, vol. I (1930), vol. II (1933), and vol. III (1943)

Language: German

The excerpts used are from Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities*, translated by Sophie Wilkins and Burton Pike (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), pp. 28–31, 575–577.

About the author

Robert Musil [1880, Klagenfurt – 1942, Geneva]: writer, dramatist and essayist. Musil spent most of his childhood in Steyr and Brünn (Cz. Brno), where his father, an engineer, was appointed to the chair of Mechanical Engineering at the German Technical University in 1891. Between 1892 and 1894, Musil attended the military boarding schools at Kismarton (*Ger.* Eisenstadt) in Hungary, and then, until 1897, in Mährisch Weißkirchen (present-day Hranice, Czech Republic). Between 1898 and 1901 he studied at the German Technical University in Brünn, qualifying as an engineer. Following his military service (1901–1902), he worked as an unpaid assistant at the Technical University in Stuttgart. In 1904, he obtained his grammar school matriculation and went to Berlin to study psychology and philosophy. In 1909, Musil completed his doctoral studies at the University of Berlin with a thesis on the Austrian physicist and philosopher Ernst Mach. Mach's theory that the world was to be understood objectively based on sensory experiences was often adopted by Musil in his literary works. Between 1911 and 1914, Musil worked as a librarian at the Technical University of Vienna. When the First World War started, Musil was a journalist for the *Neue Rundschau*. After serving briefly on the Italian front, he was transferred to the 'War Press Service'. After the war, Musil worked as a civil servant and, from 1921 as a theatre critic, essayist and writer in Vienna. His play *Die Schwärmer* (The enthusiasts) was published in 1921, for which Musil was awarded the prestigious H. Kleist Prize in 1923. He also received the G. Hauptmann Prize in 1929. Between 1931 and 1933, Musil lived in Berlin. In 1932, the *Musil-Gesellschaft* (Musil Society) was established in Berlin, aiming to provide Musil with the necessary financial means to continue working on the novel *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* (The man without qualities). After Hitler's appointment as Germany's chancellor, Musil returned to Vienna, but immigrated to Switzerland in 1938, where he lived until his death in 1942. Musil's first novel *Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törleß* (The confu-

sions of young Törless) was highly acclaimed when published in 1906. Many of the themes discussed in this novel, like sexuality and alienation, were explored in Musil's subsequent writings. Musil's main novel, *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* remained unfinished. The first two parts were published in 1930 and 1933, but the third was published posthumously by his widow in 1943. Musil's complete works were published during the 1950s, generating successive waves of critical scholarship about his contribution to Austrian and world literature.

Main works: *Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törleß* [The confusions of young Törless] (1906); *Vereinigungen* [Unions] (1911); *Die Schwärmer* [The enthusiasts] (1921); *Drei Frauen* [Three women] (1924); *Vinzenz und die Freundin bedeutender Männer* [Vinzenz and the friend of important men] (1924). *Nachlaß zu Lebzeiten* [Posthumous papers of a living author] (1936); *Über die Dummheit* [About stupidity] (1937); *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* vols. I–III [The man without qualities] (1930–1943); *Diaries*, ed. by A. Frisé, 2 vols. (1976).

Context

Since the publication of the studies by Carl Schorske, William M. Johnston, William McGrath, Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin in the 1970s and 1980s, Vienna has become a fashionable scholarly topic. Schorske, for example, explained the origins of the modernist culture of Vienna through the retreat of the heirs of Austrian liberalism, the children of the bourgeoisie, from the political realm — where various illiberal collectivisms threatened the liberal assumptions of historical, rational progress — and into the cultural temple of the aesthetic and psychological. It was a form of ahistorical modernism, Schorske contended, epitomized by the concept of Vienna as a “garden.” Another of Schorske's interpretations, namely his perception of the emergence of a “politics in a new key,” proved equally resilient in the scholarship.

Fin-de-siècle Vienna was the home not only of literary personalities like Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Arthur Schnitzler, composers like Arnold Schönberg and Gustav Mahler, or painters like Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt, but also of the pan-German and antisemitic politician Georg von Schönerer and the charismatic populist mayor of Vienna, Karl Lueger. After the 1890s, these two individuals shaped Austrian politics. The often discussed crisis of liberalism and the rise of right-wing, conservative and antisemitic forces in Vienna was often associated with, or considered a consequence of, the election of Karl Lueger as mayor in 1897. Moreover, the growing nationalism amongst Germans, Hungarians, Czechs and other minorities became more radical with the beginning of the twentieth century.

The emergence of mass politics in the 'new key' challenged the existing cultural and political order when the new intellectual elite rejected traditional politics, and turned to a form of aesthetic modernism and the occult and, ultimately, abandoned those societal values that had nurtured them. Yet, the youth's revolts against their spiritual and biological 'fathers' also generated an unprecedented cultural creativity and syncretism that eventually prompted the rise of modernism and modernity in Vienna, as it did in other European capitals at the time like Paris, London and Berlin.

Finally, one particular characteristic of the Viennese modernity was its Jewish dimension. Most lawyers, physicians, and journalists as well as prominent intellectuals, art patrons and artists were Jewish or of Jewish descent. Assimilation into the dominant Austro-German culture was these groups' preferred option, but the rise of antisemitism in Europe and the Habsburg Monarchy prompted some Jewish intellectuals, Theodor Herzl among them, to think of various forms of political identity for Jews separate from the traditional ideologies of the day: liberalism and conservatism.

Musil's *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften* powerfully reflects this cultural and political environment. The book tells the story of Ulrich, a man without qualities in Vienna of 1913. The book is as much about the main character as it is about Austria before the outbreak of the First World War: both Ulrich and Austria are experiencing severe identity crises. Musil approached these crises — spiritual, cultural and political — not only in terms of their content, but also as a search for new techniques for engaging with modernity. Influenced by Mach's philosophy, Musil believed that a scientific view of the world could fulfill an organizing function counteracting the disruptive effects of political ideologies. This scientism also signals his association with the cultural critique of modernism shared by other fin-de-siècle authors like Herman Hesse, Georg Trakl and Max Frisch.

The first part of the novel concentrates on introducing the main characters and their cultural and political settings. It is here that Musil offered one of the most lasting descriptions of the Habsburg Monarchy as "Kakania," "k. k." (short for *kaiserlich-königlich*) and "k. u. k." (*kaiserlich und königlich*) respectively. It is this expression that aptly reflects the excessive relationship between national identity and Austrian culture. Since 1867, the Austro-Hungarian Empire perfected its own brand of co-evolution in a constantly refined process of sublime simulation and blatant gratuitousness. The Empire's symbiotic dramaturgy of Catholic and Habsburg ceremonies, the enormous cast of its century-old intricate bureaucracy with its minutely defined, painstakingly differentiated roles, the role-playing in the assimilation

of Vienna's multi-ethnic transplants from all regions of the dual monarchy, and the histrionic excesses of representation in competition with other empires offered a problematic historical context and an anachronistic poetics of politics. In portraying Ulrich as a man from Vienna, without qualities, Musil explicitly connected these two dimensions of his character: he was situated at the centre of the Empire, but felt marginal and excluded.

In the excerpts selected here, Musil described a society characterized by routine and stratification, that of the waning Austro-Hungarian Empire with its many hierarchies, categorizations and contradictions. He satirized impulses to invest the Empire's national spaces with symbolic value, as he knew that reality indicated the contrary, namely lack of ethnic solidarity and harmony in Vienna and other centers of the Empire. The historical context described by Musil was permanently in flux, and the fractured national identities of the Empire found expression in the identity of the novel's main character.

This tension between the individual and its larger social unit (community and state) is also reflected in Musil's two alternating narrative modes throughout the novel: one offering a scientific, objective and detached perspective, the other posing an individualized existentialist account. These are two main ways of explaining the situation in pre-1914 Kakania, and both led to a perception of time, memory and space as distended and distorted. To this end, Ulrich's personal life does not make sense according to the traditional pattern of a *Bildungsroman* identity quest. In fact, Ulrich — like Kakania — is described through a conglomerate of layered social discourses and a collection of commercial advertising, banal conversations, bureaucratic fixation and militaristic audacity, all characterizing features of the Viennese elite before and during the First World War.

Musil's 'The man without qualities' can, ultimately, be read as an evaluation of the ethical and the aesthetic in the emerging Austrian national identity after 1914. More specifically, the novel dramatizes the attempt to aesthetically bridge the two conditions. Ulrich constantly attempts to elevate his existence to the level of ordinary experience, but he fails due to the unacceptability of the obliteration of practical social values this experience entails. The failure also points to what the Austro-Hungarian Empire was to experiment after 1918, that is, abandoning the quest for a multinational identity and reconciling with its new form of existence in a national state. This was to be a state organized not around dynastic and religious principles but around a host of practical and pragmatic considerations and guided by the hybrid reality of conflicting claims to what constituted a modern Austrian identity.

After his death Musil's work was almost forgotten in German speaking countries, and his writings only started to reappear in the beginning of the 1950s. Yet, today, due to the ever growing scholarship on modernity, and the role Austria played in the emergence of the modern aesthetic, art and literature, Robert Musil is constantly discussed and analyzed. Scholars like David Luft, Stefan Jonsson and Hannah Hickman in particular, describe him as one of the most important analysts of the transition from nineteenth-century idealist modernity to its more somber, twentieth-century version.

MT

The man without qualities

There, in Kakania, that state since vanished that no one understood, in many ways an exemplary state, though unappreciated, there was a tempo too, but not too much tempo. Whenever one thought of that country from someplace abroad, the memory that hovered before one's eyes was of white, wide, prosperous-looking roads dating from the era of foot marches and mail coaches, roads that crisscrossed the country in every direction like rivers of order, like ribbons of bright military twill, the paper-white arm of the administration holding all the provinces in its embrace. And what provinces they were! Glaciers and sea, Karst limestone and Bohemian fields of grain, nights on the Adriatic chirping with restless cicadas, and Slovakian villages where the smoke rose from chimneys as from upturned nostrils while the village cowered between two small hills as if the earth had parted its lips to warm its child between them. Of course cars rolled on these roads too, but not too many! The conquest of the air was being prepared here too, but not too intensively. A ship would now and then be sent off to South America or East Asia, but not too often. There was no ambition for world markets or world power. Here at the very center of Europe, where the world's old axes crossed, words such as "colony" and "overseas" sounded like something quite untried and remote. There was some show of luxury, but by no means as in such overrefined ways as the French. People went in for sports, but not as fanatically as the English. Ruinous sums of money were spent on the army, but only just enough to secure its position as the second-weakest among the great powers. The capital, too, was somewhat smaller than all the other biggest cities of the world, but considerably bigger than a mere big city. And the country's administration was conducted in an enlightened, unobtrusive manner, with all sharp edges cautiously smoothed over, by the best bureaucracy in Europe, which could be faulted only in that it regarded genius, and any brilliant indi-

vidual initiative not backed by noble birth or official status, as insolent and presumptuous. But then, who welcomes interference from unqualified outsiders? And in Kakania, at least, it would only happen that a genius would be regarded as a lout, but never was a mere lout taken—as happens elsewhere for a genius.

All in all, how many amazing things might be said about this vanished Kakania! Everything and every person in it, for instance, bore the label of *kaiserlich-königlich* (Imperial-Royal) or *kaiserlich und königlich* (Imperial and Royal), abbreviated as "k.k." or "k.&k.," but to be sure which institutions and which persons were to be designated by "k.k." and which by "k.&k." required the mastery of a secret science. On paper it was called the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, but in conversation it was called Austria, a name solemnly abjured officially while stubbornly retained emotionally, just to show that feelings are quite as important as constitutional law and that regulations are one thing but real life is something else entirely. Liberal in its constitution, it was administered clerically. The government was clerical, but everyday life was liberal. All citizens were equal before the law, but not everyone was a citizen. There was a Parliament, which asserted its freedom so forcefully that it was usually kept shut; there was also an Emergency Powers Act that enabled the government to get along without Parliament, but then, when everyone had happily settled for absolutism, the Crown decreed that it was time to go back to parliamentary rule. The country was full of such goings on, among them the sort of nationalist movements that rightly attracted so much attention in Europe and are so thoroughly misunderstood today. They were so violent that they jammed the machinery of government and brought it to a dead stop several times a year, but in the intervals and during the deadlocks people got along perfectly well and acted as if nothing had happened. And in fact, nothing really *had* happened. It was only that everyone's natural resentment of everyone else's efforts to get ahead, a resentment we all feel nowadays, had crystallized earlier in Kakania, where it can be said to have assumed the form of a sublimated ceremonial rite, which could have had a great future had its development not been cut prematurely short by a catastrophe.

For it was not only the resentment of one's fellow citizens that had become intensified there into a strong sense of community; even the lack of faith in oneself and one's own fate took on the character of a deep self-certainty. In this country one acted—sometimes to the highest degree of passion and its consequences—differently from the way one thought, or one thought differently from the way one acted. Uninitiated observers have mis-

taken this for charm, or even for a weakness of what they thought to be the Austrian character. But they were wrong; it is always wrong to explain what happens in a country by the character of its inhabitants. For the inhabitant of a country has at least nine characters: a professional, a national, a civic, a class, a geographic, a sexual, a conscious, an unconscious, and possibly even a private character to boot. He unites them in himself, but they dissolve him, so that he is really nothing more than a small basin hollowed out by these many streamlets that trickle into it and drain out of it again, to join other such rills in filling some other basin. Which is why every inhabitant of the earth also has a tenth character that is nothing else than the passive fantasy of spaces yet unfilled. This permits a person all but one thing: to take seriously what his at least nine other characters do and what happens to them; in other words, it prevents precisely what should be his true fulfillment. This interior space—admittedly hard to describe—is of a different shade and shape in Italy from what it is in England, because everything that stands out in relief against it is of a different shade and shape; and yet it is in both places the same: an empty, invisible space, with reality standing inside it like a child's toy town deserted by the imagination.

Insofar as this can become visible to all eyes it had happened in Kakania, making Kakania, unbeknownst to the world, the most progressive state of all; a state just barely able to go along with itself. One enjoyed a negative freedom there, always with the sense of insufficient grounds for one's own existence, and lapped around by the great fantasy of all that not happened irrevocably as by the breath of those oceans from which mankind had once emerged.

Events that might be regarded as momentous elsewhere were here introduced with a casual „*Es ist passiert...*”—a peculiar form of “it happened” unknown elsewhere in German or any other language, whose breath could transform facts and blows of fate into something as light as thistledown or thought. Perhaps, despite so much that can be said against it, Kakania was, after all, a country for geniuses which is probably what brought it to its ruin. [...]

And so this reflection on the principle of psychic equilibrium leads us from the beautiful example of Bonadea¹ to the sad case of Kakania. For Kakania was the first country in our present historical phase from which God withdrew His credit: the love of life, faith in itself, and the ability of all civi-

¹ *Bona Dea* (“the good goddess”): Roman deity worshipped only by women on the Calends of May.

lized nations to disseminate the useful illusion that they have a mission to fulfill. It was an intelligent country, it housed cultivated people who, like cultivated people all over the globe, ran around in an unsettled state of mind amid a tremendous whirl of noise, speed, innovation, conflict, and whatever goes to make up the optical-acoustical landscape of our lives; like everybody else, they read and heard every day dozens of news items that made their hair stand on end, and were willing to work themselves up over them, even to intervene, but they never got around to it because a few minutes afterward the stimulus had already been displaced in their minds by more recent ones; like everyone else, they felt surrounded by murder, killings, passion, self-sacrifice, and greatness, all somehow going on within the Gordian knot that was forming around them, but they could never break through to these adventures because they were trapped in an office or somewhere, at work, and by evening, when they where free, their unresolved tensions exploded into forms of relaxation that failed to relax them. There was the special problem for persons of cultivated sensibilities, at least for those who did not devote themselves so single-mindedly to love as Bonadea: they no longer had the gift of faith or credit, nor had they learned to fake it. They no longer knew what their smiles, their sighs, their ideas, were for. What exactly was the point of their thoughts, their smiles? Their opinions were haphazard, their inclinations an old story, the scheme of things seemed to be hanging in mid-air, one ran into it as into a net, and there was nothing to do or leave undone with all one's heart, because there was no unifying principle. And so the cultivated person was someone who felt steadily mounting up a debt that he would never be able to pay off, felt bankruptcy inexorably approaching; and either inveighed against the times in which he was condemned to live, even though he-enjoyed living in them like anyone else, or else hurled himself with the courage of those who have nothing to lose at every idea that promised a change.

It was the same as anywhere else in the world, of course, but when God cut off Kakania's credit, He did it in so special a style that whole nations had their eyes opened to the high cost of civilization. Like bacteria they had been sitting pretty in their culture medium, without bothering their heads about the proper curvature of the sky above or anything, when suddenly things tightened up. Although men are not normally aware of it, they must believe that they are something more than they are in order to be capable of being what they are; they need to feel this something more above and around them, and there are times when they suddenly miss it. What is missed is something imaginary. Nothing at all had happened in Kakania, and formerly it would

have been thought of as the old, unobtrusive Kakanian way of life, but this nothing had become as disturbing as getting no sleep or seeing no sense in anything. And so it was easy enough for the intellectuals, once they had persuaded themselves that an ethnically homogeneous culture was the answer, to make the Kakanian ethnic minorities believe it, as a kind of substitute for religion or for the ideal of the Good Emperor in Vienna, or simply as a way of understanding the incomprehensible fact that there are seven days in the week. There are so many inexplicable things in life, but one loses sight of them when singing the national anthem. It would naturally be at such a moment that a good Kakanian could have joyfully answered the question of what he was by saying: "Nothing," meaning that Something that could make of a Kakanian everything he had never yet been! But the Kakanians were not so stiff-necked a people and contented themselves with a compromise, in that every nationality tried only to do with every other nationality whatever suited its own purposes. It is naturally hard in these circumstances to empathize with grievances not one's own. After two thousand years of altruistic teachings, we have become so unselfish that even if it means you or I have to suffer, we are bound to take the part of the other fellow. But it would be wrong to think of the notorious Kakanian nationalist rivalries as particularly savage. It was more a historical process than a real one. The people actually quite liked each other; even though they did crack each others heads and spit in each other's faces, it was done as a matter of higher cultural considerations, as when a man who normally wouldn't hurt a fly, for instance, will sit in court under the image of Christ Crucified and condemn another man to death. It is only fair to say that whenever their higher selves relaxed a bit, the Kakanians breathed a sigh of relief and, born consumers of food and drink as they were, looked with amazement upon their role as the tools of history.

Translated by Sophie Wilkins and Burton Pike in Robert Musil, *The Man without Qualities* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995), pp. 28–31 and 575–577.

GJERGJ FISHTA: THE HIGHLAND LUTE

Title: *Lahuta e Malcis* (The highland lute)

Originally published: Shkodër, Shtypshkronja Françeskane, 1937

Language: Albanian

The excerpts used are from *The Highland Lute (Lahuta e Malcis)*; *The Albanian National Epic*, translated from the Albanian by Robert Elsie & Janice Mathie-Heck (London and New York: I.B. Tauris in association with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2005), pp. 3–4.

About the author

Gjergj Fishta (born **Zef Ndoka**) [1871, Fishtë, near Shkodra – 1939, Shkodra, west Albania]: poet, writer, politician, publicist, educator, and one of the most prominent figures in Albanian cultural life during the first half of the twentieth century. He was educated initially in Franciscan colleges in Troshan and in Shkodra (*It. Scutari, Srb. Skadar*). In 1886, Zef was sent by the Franciscan order to Bosnia, where he attended several Franciscan schools. There he came into close contact with the classical Latin and modern West European literary traditions, as well as with Croatian poets Andrija Kačić-Miošić (1704–1760) and Silvije Strahimir Kranjčević (1865–1908). He was ordained a priest in 1894 and was formally accepted into the Franciscan order with the name Gjergj Fishta. Soon afterwards, he returned to Shkodra and started working as a teacher in the college of Troshan and as the parish priest in the nearby village of Gomsiqe. In 1899, together with other well-known Albanian activists, he founded the cultural association *Bashkimi* (Unity), which prepared and published a dictionary of the northern dialect of the Albanian language. By 1902 Fishta had become director of all Franciscan schools in northern Albania. He replaced Italian with Albanian as the language of instruction. In 1907, together with another well-known cultural activist, Shtjefën Gjeçovi-Kryeziu (1879–1929), Fishta founded the first Albanian public library in Shkodra. He participated in the ‘Congress of Representatives of Albanian Societies’ held in Manastir (*Gr. Monastiri, Mac. Bitola*) in 1908 and was elected president of the special committee, whose aim was to choose a definitive alphabet for the Albanian language. In 1913 Fishta founded the monthly *Hylli i Dritës* (The day-star), one of the most important cultural periodicals in Albania prior to 1944. Between 1916 and 1919 he edited the cultural biweekly *Posta e Shqypnis* (The herald of Albania) in Shkodra. Together with other well-known literary and political figures, Fishta participated in the works of the *Komisija Letrare Shqype* (Albanian literary commission), which decided that the Latin

alphabet (with several new letters) should become the alphabet for Albanian. He opted for the choice of the northern dialect as the future Albanian literary language, but the 'Commission' decided that it should be built on the basis of the vernacular of Elbasan as a compromise between the northern (Gheg) and southern (Tosk) dialects. In 1919 Fishta served as the secretary of the Albanian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. In 1921 he was elected a representative of the region of Shkodra and the vice-president of the first Albanian National Assembly. Although he served as the superior of the Franciscans in Albania between 1935 and 1938, Fishta withdrew from political and social activity in 1937. He moved to the Gjuhadoll monastery, where he spent his last years editing his literary works. In 1939 he was nominated a regular member of the Italian Academy of Sciences and Arts, although this was perceived as a controversial act. With a total of almost 100,000 verses, numerous articles and prose texts to his name, he was named "the Albanian Homer" during his lifetime. This high position was confirmed by the fact that Gjergj Fishta was the first Albanian to have been nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature. Soon after his death in December 1940, communist rule was established in Albania. The new authorities condemned Fishta, calling him a traitor due to the fact that he accepted the nomination to the Italian Academy of Sciences and Arts. They considered him a reactionary writer, due to the Catholic themes in his works, and an agent of the Vatican due to his educational activities. Nevertheless, people continued to remember Fishta's works; in Kosovo his poem 'The highland lute' has been particularly praised and cherished.

Main works: *Vierrsha i pershpirteshem t'kthym shcyp* [Spiritual verse translated into Albanian] (1906); *Anxat e Parnasit* [The wasps of Parnassus] (1907); *Pika Voeset* [Dewdrops] (1909); *Mrizi i zâneve* [Mid-day rest of the Zanas] (1913); *Gomari i Babatasit. Poem dramatik* [The Babatasi's donkey. A dramatic poem] (1923); *Vallja e Parizit* [The dance of paradise] (1925); *Sh. Luigji Gonzaga. Melodrama* [St. Aloysius of Gonzaga. A melodrama] (1927); *Shna Ndou i Padues* [St. Anthony of Padua] (1927); *Lahuta e malcis* [The highland lute] (complete edition 1937).

Context

By any measure, the 15613-line epic poem *Lahuta e Malcis* is the *opus magnum* of Gjergj Fishta. The first cantos were published in Zadar in 1905 and 1907, while the final and full edition was published finally in 1937 in Shkodra for commemorating the 25th anniversary of the declaration of Albanian independence.

During his life, Fishta witnessed four crucial periods of modern Albanian history: the end of the Ottoman rule; the early and troubled years of the independence; interwar stabilization under the rule of king Zogu; followed by the occupation of Albania by Fascist Italy in 1939. *Lahuta e Malcis* refers only to the first period. In his thirty cantos, the poet recounted some of the main historical events from 1858 until the recognition of Albanian independence in 1912. Several authors have used the word 'encyclopedia' to describe the con-

tent of the poem, but *Lahuta e Malcis* is more reminiscent of a chronicle delivered in a poetic narrative. It starts with the local skirmishes between Albanian highlanders of the Hot tribe and their Montenegrin neighbors who had attacked them. Fishta evokes the heroic act of Oso Kuka, who, betrayed, wounded and surrounded by the Montenegrins, prefers to blow himself and his wounded comrades up rather than to fall into the hands of the enemy alive. The main corpus of the poem, however, is comprised in the cantos from VI to XXV, which focus on the events of the League of Prizren between the years 1878 and 1880. Episodes describing large battles are followed by scenes of fierce duels between heroes from both sides as well as supra-natural beings, such as the *ora* and *zana* (protective mountain spirits, often imagined as young women) who help them. In the last cantos, Fishta describes the Young Turk revolution, the general uprising in northern Albania, and finally the Balkan war and its outcome—the declaration of the Albanian independence.

Fishta's work was not the first epic poem written in Albanian, especially during the period of national revival. But, it is arguably the most powerful in terms of literary impact and the most successful in its public reception. He followed the path of two other great poets: Jeronim de Rada (1814–1903) and Naim Frashëri (1846–1900). However, he did not focus on the distant past to create a national hero as his predecessors had done with the figure of Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg (circa 1405–1468). As Fishta himself once mentioned to a disciple and friend, the hero of the *Lahuta e Malcis* is the Albanian nation. The presence of various heroes was interpreted by some scholars as an influence of the ancient Greek epic tradition, especially of *Iliad*, the fifth book of which Fishta had translated into Albanian.

Both in terms of stylistic form and content, *Lahuta e Malcis* was deeply inspired by the Albanian epic oral tradition as depicted in the songs sung with the accompaniment of the *lahuta* (Srb. gusle) or the *çifteli*. The richness of language and the means of expression owes very much to this tradition. Moreover, Fishta made use of the most common 'Albanian' folk verse, the trochaic octameter, though sometimes it also appears in the form of heptameter. The most important feature, though, that proves the interconnection between the oral epic tradition and Fishta's poem is the idealization of the heroic life of the Albanian highlanders. The customary law is celebrated as the absolute and ideal mode of social being. In this sense, although different and in many aspects more modern than his predecessors, Fishta nevertheless was under the strong influence of romantic trends.

The publication of consecutive parts of the poem and the final edition of 1937 proved not only the mastery of Fishta as a poet, but also the capacity

that the modern Albanian language offered to poets and writers. Since the very first edition, but especially after the final and complete one, *Lahuta e Malcis* was declared by critics and readers to be a masterpiece not only of the author but of Albanian literature in general.

Almost immediately after the Second World War, Gjergj Fishta was accused of being one of the supporters of the Italian occupation of Albania. His works were banned in their entirety, whereas *Lahuta e Malcis* was frequently labeled a reactionary, nationalistic, chauvinistic and anti-Slavic poem. Thus, he shared the same fate of many of his collaborators and friends who after the war were executed or sentenced to long prison terms. Although during the years of the communist regime the crucial role that the 'Congress of Manastir' played in the development of the Albanian national movement and indeed the Albanian language was emphasized, there was never any mention of the president of the 'Congress' and the president of the 'Committee for the Alphabet', Mid'hat Frashëri (1880–1947) and Gjergj Fishta respectively, since both were labeled as representatives of reactionary and conservative forces. Following the well-known practices of Stalinist propaganda, Fishta's image was removed from the visual representations of the period together with other 'respected' figures. In 1967, during the harshest period of the 'cultural revolution' in Albania, even his grave in Shkodra was opened and the remains thrown into the river Drin.

The poet and his work, however, never disappeared from cultural memory in Kosovo, where, even during communist times, he was widely read and idolized. For Albanian youngsters in Kosovo, especially with the coming of the harsh period of suppression between 1980 and 1990, *Lahuta e Malcis* became a source of inspiration, a strong instrument of social, cultural, and eventually national homogenization. It was only with the fall of communism that Fishta reappeared in the literary and cultural scene in Albania, along with many other persecuted and forgotten authors. In December 1990, a ceremony commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Fishta's death was organized in Shkodra, although there was still fear of the powerful *Sigurimi* (Secret police). During the ceremonies the famous actor Ndrekë Luca hesitated in his recitation of a verse from the *Lahuta e Malcis*, but the audience spontaneously filled in the missing line.

RH

The Highland lute

The invocation form the Canto I

The Bandits

Help me God as you once helped me,
 Five hundred years are now behind us
 Since Albania the fair was taken
 Since the Turks snared and enslaved her,
 Left it in blood our wretched homeland,
 Let her suffocate and wither
 That she ever live in sorrow,
 That, when beaten, she kept silent
 Mice within the walls wept for her,
 Serpents under stones took pity!
 As when first a steer's yoked under,
 Oxbow weighing hard upon it,
 There's no sense at all to prod it,
 It will balk, not pull the ploughshare,
 Only crisscross fields at fancy,
 Furnish trouble for the farmer,
 Will refuse to till the furrows
 When alone or with another.
 So it is with the Albanians,
 Under foreign yoke unwilling
 To be slaves, pay tithes and taxes.
 Always have they wandered freely,
 None but God above them knowing,
 Never on their lands and pastures
 Would they bow before a master,
 Never with the Turks agreeing,
 Never out of sight their riffles.
 They waged war on them, were slaughtered,
 Just as if with *shkjas*¹ in battle.

¹ Etymologically this word comes from Latin *sclavus* and in the past it referred to the Slavic neighbors of the Albanians. Nowadays, especially in Kosovo, it has negative connotations in comparison to the neutral *Slav*, used in Albania and in the standard Albanian language.

Therefore, when Turkish *ora*'s²
 Vigour waned, began to weaken,
 When her drive began to crumble,
 Russia day by day beset her
 And the tribesmen of the Balkans
 Newly fled the sultan's power,
 Did the Albanians start to ponder
 How to free their native country
 From the Turkish yoke and make it
 As when ruled by Castriota³,
 When Albanians lived in freedom,
 Did not bow or show submission,
 To a foreign king or sultan,
 Did not pay them tithes and taxes,
 And Albania's banner fluttered
 Like the wings of all God's angels
 Like the bolts of lightning flashing,
 Waving high atop their homeland [...]

Translated by Robert Elsie & Janice Mathie-Heck in Gjergj Fishta, *The Highland Lute (Lahuta e Macis)*; *The Albanian National Epic*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris in association with The Centre for Albanian Studies, 2005), pp. 3–4.

² A female mythical figure that appears frequently in the folklore of northern Albania and Kosovo as a sort of fairy godmother. However, sometimes the *ora* also resemble the ancient Greek Erinies.

³ Fishta refers here to Gjergj Kastrioti Skënderbeg (c. 1405–1468), the medieval figure, who in the second half of nineteenth century became the national hero of the Albanians.

MIROSLAV KRLEŽA: THE BANQUET IN BLITVA

Title: *Banquet in Blitva; roman u tri knjige* (The banquet in Blitva; a novel in three books).

Originally published: Zagreb, Biblioteka nezavisnih pisaca, 1938.

Language: Croatian

The excerpt used is from Miroslav Krleža, *The banquet in Blitva*, translated by Edward Dennis Goy and Jasna Levinger-Goy (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2004), pp. 5–13.

About the author

Miroslav Krleža [1893 Zagreb – 1981, Zagreb]: writer and the most outstanding Croatian intellectual of the twentieth century. He graduated from a military cadet school in Pécs, and attended the Ludoviceum Military Academy in Budapest, from which he dropped out in 1913, starting a literary career. He spent most of the First World War in hospitals as a military convalescent, while publishing his first books, which immediately turned him into a prominent writer. He started his political career as an advocate of unitary Yugoslavism, and after the Bolshevik revolution he became a fervent advocate of Leninism. From the 1920s onwards, he worked as a freelance writer and soon became known as the most outstanding Croatian and Yugoslav left-wing intellectual. He was chief editor of the literary magazines *Plamen* (The flame) (1919), *Književna republika* (The literature republic) (1923–1927), *Danas* (Nowadays) (1934) and *Pečat* (The seal) (1939), which popularized among interwar Yugoslav youth the notion of a socialist Yugoslav federation as the only path to south Slavic national emancipation. In the second half of the 1930s, he was engaged in the harsh debate with the party leadership (the so called ‘Clash on the literary Left’) opposing Stalinism and advocating the autonomy of art. During the Second World War, he remained inactive in Zagreb, being also ostracized by the new communist regime until Tito’s break with Stalin in 1948. In the 1950s, he founded the Yugoslav Lexicographic Institute (nowadays known as the Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute), pushing for the autonomy of literature against the socialist principle, an effort in which he was largely successful. In the 1960s, he was even co-opted by the party to join the ‘Central Committee’ of the Croatian branch. He resigned, though, after offering public support to the ‘Croatian Spring’, the mass reform movement advocating the autonomy of Croatia in the early 1970s. After the suppression of the movement, he became almost completely politically and intellectually inactive till his death. Krleža’s canonization in socialist Yugoslavia had a twofold character: he was

officially praised as the greatest Yugoslav intellectual and artist ever, and as an ideologue of Tito's special path to socialism. Semi-officially he was always suspected of not being entirely dedicated to the communist ideals (in popular language he was called a "salon communist"). Politically, Serb nationalist circles accused him of Croatian nationalism, while Croatian nationalists labeled him a Yugoslav. Due to this fact, in the 1990s, he was partly abandoned, although never completely neglected.

Main works: *Hrvatska rapsodija* [Croatian rhapsody] (1918); *Hrvatski bog Mars* [The Croatian god Mars] (1922); *Novele* [Short stories] (1923); *Vučjak* (1924); *Izlet u Rusiju* [Trip to Russia] (1926); *Gospoda Glembajevi* [Glembay gentlemen] (1928); *U agoniji* [In agony] (1931); *Eseji* [Essays] (1932); *Moj obračun s njima* [My showdown with them] (1932); *Povratak Filipa Latinovicza* [The return of Philip Latinowicz] (1932); *Legende* [Legends] (1933); *U logoru* [In the camp] (1934); *Evropa danas* [Europe nowadays] (1935); *Balade Petrice Kerempuha* [The ballads of Petrica Kerempuh] (1936); *Deset krvavih godina* [Ten bloody years] (1937); *Na rubu pameti* [On the edge of reason] (1938); *Banket u Blitvi 2 vols.* [The banquet in Blitva] (1938–39); *Dijalektički antibarbarus* [The dialectical anti-barbarus] (1939); *Djetinjstvo u Agramu* [Childhood in Agram] (1952); *O Erazmu Rotterdamskom* [On Erasmus of Rotterdam] (1953); *Aretej* [Aretheus] (1959); *Banket u Blitvi vol. III* [The banquet in Blitva, part III] (1962); *Zastave* [The banners] (1962–1975); *Dnevnik* [Diary] (1977).

Context

Krleža began his writing and intellectual career in the 1920s as a harsh critic of Yugoslav bourgeois society and a staunch advocate of communism, which he regarded to be the solution to all national and social problems among post-war south Slavs. Hence, his writings followed the contemporary European anti-war literary stream. However, he incorporated into his thought aspects of Leninism and a criticism of Croatian petit-bourgeois nationalism, claiming that it hindered the modern national and, especially, social emancipation of the masses. This amalgamation was even more obvious in his parallel non-fiction writing, in which he condemned the immorality of the bourgeois world and the Croatian 'periphery' syndrome, considered to be the national inferiority complex which compelled the elites to fabricate a Croatian national idea based on a backward celebration of national history. However, Krleža abandoned unitarism well before the Communist Party officially did (see **August Cesarec**, *The national question and our missions*). He also openly supported **Stjepan Radić's** Croatian agrarian movement as a starting point for mass emancipation, while simultaneously criticizing Radić's ideology as an expression of petit-bourgeois nationalism. Positioning himself in the 1920s as the most influential Yugoslav communist intellectual, Krleža gradually entered into a dispute with the Communist Party, due to the latter's

attempt to impose the 'socialist realism' canon. This conflict reached its peak in the late 1930s, known as the 'clash of the literary Left', when he openly refuted Stalinism and advocated the autonomy of art, which nearly cost him his membership in the party. This was most strongly expressed in his novels *Na rubu pameti* (On the edge of reason) and *Banket u Blitvi* (The banquet in Blitva), published during the peak of the 'clash of the literary Left'.

While *Na rubu pameti* is narrowly focused on the clash between the individual and the society, in *Banket u Blitvi* Krleža also alludes to the contemporary realities of Eastern Europe by locating the main plot in the imagined region of 'Northeast Europe'. This plot is constructed around the political activities of a Blitvinian liberal intellectual Niels Nielsen against the dictatorship of colonel Kristian Barutanski. The movement Nielsen initiated subsequently turned into a general rebellion against "peripheral nationalism" in all the countries of the region (Blatvia, Hunija, Kobilija). The similarities between the imaginary countries and the actual ones are obvious on a few levels, from the game with the toponyms (for example, Blitva is Lithuania, 'Litva' in Croatian, and Blatvia is Latvia), to the depiction of the actual political situation, where newly-declared countries emerge with the 1917 peace in the "mud of Blitva" (an obvious allusion to the Brest-Litovsk peace agreement) and promptly rediscover their identity under the impact of fierce nationalism. These allusions are overtly exposed in the case of Blitva, where Krleža clearly evokes Poland, probably because he felt an extreme repulsion towards **Piłsudski's** nationalistic path to socialism. Polish characteristics are visible in Blitvinian politics (such as the 1925 *coup d'état* organized by Barutanski and his legions against the corrupt government as well as the actual territorial dispute with neighboring countries over the port of Playvistok) and in the main political characters (Barutanski as Piłsudski and the sculptor Roman Rajevski as Ignacy Paderewski). With Blitva, however, Krleža reflected even more on contemporary Croatia and Yugoslavia, which is most concretely expressed in the excerpt presented here, the book's introductory chapter entitled 'A form of prologue or sentimental variations on the Blitvanian question through the ages'. These references are already present in the political songs in the first section of the excerpt, in which Barutanski's legions paraphrase the most famous Serbian First World War song 'March on, march on, King Petar's Guard'. At the same time, he portrays the democratic opposition using a paraphrase of the Pan-Slavist song and later anthem of socialist Yugoslavia 'Hey Slavs, still within us dwell our fathers' voices clear'. Finally, a paraphrase of the old Romantic song of the Croatian Illyrian movement is attributed to the agrarian government: 'Croatia shall not ever perish

while we, her sons, are still alive' (see **Janko Drašković**, *Dissertation, or treatise*). Krleža's allusions to Croatia are mostly evident in the depiction of the history of Blitva's national question, where Krleža, similar to the Hungarian intellectual **István Bibó**, describes Blitvinian national identity as a mixture of an inferiority complex and a fundamental fear concerning the survival of the community, due to its political subordination to the Aragon Empire (Austro-Hungarian Empire in the Croatian case) and the peripheral geographic position of "Blitva's mud" (Krleža's favorite allegory of the 'Pannonian mud', which he used in order to refer to the Croatian peripheral inferiority complex).

Krleža interprets this peripheral status as the cradle of petit-bourgeois nationalism obsessed with "a thousand years" of historic tradition, and as the main course to the historical "betrayal of the elites," who exchanged national emancipation for offices and positions. Simultaneously, the only positive agents of Blitvinian history, the Youth movement and the politicians Flaming-Sandersen and Petersen, are clear allusions on the Yugoslav 'Nationalist Youth' (see **Antun Gustav Matoš**, *Art and nationalism*), Ante Starčević (see **Franjo Rački**, *Yugoslavism*) and **Frano Supilo**. Eventually, the main message of the *Banket u Blitvi* is that no political system, even the communist one, can enable total human emancipation, due to eternal "human dumbness." Hence, Krleža stresses in the last sentence of the excerpt (*"Incipit comoedia blithuanica!"*) the function of the novel as a stage play, trying to express a naturalistic picture of human society as a constant staging of the oppression of one people over another.

At the time of its publication, *Banket u Blitvi* was dismissed by the Communist Party as 'decadent', while it was simultaneously prohibited by the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. However, in socialist Yugoslavia, it was praised as a critique of both the bourgeois society and of fascism. With the liberalization of the system from the late 1960s onwards, Krleža was recognized as an advocate of individual emancipation, in opposition to any political regime.

The banquet in Blitva

A form of prologue or sentimental variations on the Blitvinian question through the ages

One of the first romantics who raised this question to himself and to his fellow citizens was Dr. Niels Nielsen, an independent publicist and the publisher of the Tribune. And what happened? They trampled on him like a mad dog and continued with their agenda, chanting their anthem: "March on, march on, oh you brigade of Blitva."

Already during the parliamentary rule of Dr. Muzhikovski, Dr. Nielsen had written an interesting and well-documented study, *The Law of Blitva — As an Essential Part of the Blitvinian Question*.¹ Readers will forgive us if, in the framework of this informative introduction, we hold generally to Dr. Nielsen's ideas expressed in the abovementioned book. First, because we, looking at this unusually tangled complex of the Blitva-Blatvia-Hunnia question, from a dim and distant foreign country, lack the ability to create a clear picture for ourselves and, second, because the character of Dr. Nielsen will play a somewhat important role in our story. It seems to us that it may be no bad thing if we create for ourselves some sort of concept of this bold character who caused the death of almost all the main heroes of this sad history of Blitva.

The question of Blitva (according to Dr. Nielsen) had remained open since the second half of the eighteenth century, when the Blitva-Swedish line of the Hunnish throne died out, to be renewed after the revolutionary crises of '48 and '66 by the peace of Blato Blitvinsko in '17 and remained "open" through all the many changes to this very day, just as unresolved, just as fateful as it was from the beginning: too weak to solve itself, yet too strong to be solved by the forces that denied it.

The character of Flaming-Sandersen,² in itself, represented nothing other than the politico-moral continuation, by inertia, of the revolutionary elan of '48, and Flaming-Sandersen's words concerning "the laws of Blitva" and of "Blitva's right to freedom" were no more than echoes of that freedom-loving, romantic, and hazy enthusiasm which dissolved so futilely beneath the walls of European feudalism. Yet as a distant reflection it still had the power to

¹ Dr. Nielsen's book was published immediately after the coup by Colonel Barutanski, that is to say, in 1926. [Author's footnote].

² Flaming-Sandersen (1818–85): the great Ideologue of Blitva and follower of Garibaldi [Author's footnote].

shine in the absolute darkness of the dark decades between the rule of absolutism and the world war, as a hope, a dream, an illusion, as a false and hypocritical phrase. This same poetic inspiration fluoresced with a magic glow, even at the time when, in Blitva, everything appeared to be on its deathbed. "The Blitvinian question," as a phrase, sounded like a fanfare signaling the denial of a whole list of violence and injustices, and yet the worn and tedious refrain regarding "Blitva's freedom" and "Blitva's right" was, chances are, conditioned by real and actual circumstances, for otherwise it would have been lost and vanished forever. All this vast and endless mass of deceit and injustice, of theft and robbery (which the socialists later defined, not very wittily, as "the infiltration of Hunnish and Ingermanlandish imperialism" and as "the creation of a market for the developed Karabaltic industries" in the poor and illiterate land of Blitva), all this inexhaustible mass of violence and varying forms of moral and material corruption over a period of more than thirty years was denied by the concept of "The Right of Blitva," that is, "The Right" of a poor, peasant, illiterate, and enslaved Blitvinian people not to be poor or illiterate or enslaved for the profit of others by other "more advanced" peoples, who were only "more advanced" because they had revolvers and could, in the interest of their state-supported plundering and murder, order the unarmed Blitvinian poor to put their hands up whenever it occurred to them in the name of high interest and the so-called creation of markets. The messieurs doctors of law and divinity (generally speaking humanistic gentlemen well read in literature) desired to define this basic "Blitvinian right" not to be enslaved, as was natural, in a bourgeois, petit bourgeois, and semi-feudal manner, and so for the illiterate and poverty-stricken Blitvinian peasant masses they created a romantic Karabaltic legend concerning a rich thousand years of Blitva's past statehood, and thus began the fatal petit bourgeois diversion from the path of immediate reality into the illusion of "poor Blitva," of "the Blitvinian pagan traditions," of "the tragic character of the Blitvinian national hero Jarl Knutson," of "the Karabaltic mission," and so on and so forth. The millennium of the Hunnish kingdom gained its counterpart in the Blitvinian millennium. Paningermanlandia had to be overcome by Panblitvania. The Hunnish, Aragon, Swedish, and Blatvian kings lost battles in the sonnets written by patriotic Blitvinian poets, in which, by some superior logic, the heroic bearers of the Blitvinian crown conquered. For what sort of a royal Blitvinian tercet would it be if it lacked a victorious *Ausklang*: While we have sabers, Blitva will live?

As in the verses of Andria Waldemaras (the greatest romantic epigone of the new Blitvinian literature), the Blitvinian epic moved in the clouds of the

Blitvinian Valhalla, and that romantic "historiographic" opera continues today in the "heroic" characters of the greatest and most famous, both in Europe and the two Americas, painter, sculptor, and political ideologue Roman Rajevski.

The main reason for this Pan-Blitvinian petit bourgeois diversion into romanticism was fear of destruction, horror at collapse and defeat, despair at the pending dangers that always threatened to swallow the existence and independence of the Blitvinian and Pan-Blitvinian national substance. In these endlessly tangled complexities, the Blitvinian question welled up like a spring. In this land it surged and flowed from all sides like an underground river, and there was nothing in Blitva around which and beneath which "the Blitvinian question" did not appear like a ghost: in politics; in literature; in the daily press; in church sermons; in street fights; in war; in peace; in foreign, Hunnish parliamentary discussions; in the independent Blitvinian diet; in state coups; in blood, in the endless streams of Blitvinian blood that flowed and ran as from an open wound. All personal questions, all the circles of personal Blitvinian existence for the last hundred years, trembled, died, and rotted in the shadow of this question. Why should someone shoot themselves at a time when all the laws of a respectable career would imply that he had no good reason for doing so? Why did someone drink themselves to death? Why did somebody die as a wasted talent? Why was someone dismissed from the Hunnish or the Inger-manlandish state service for voting contra, and why did someone have to leave for Transilmengia to the Aragon Pantocrator in a humble deputation, so as to gain the concession for the first Blitvinian distillery, which the drunken Blitvinian peasants would burn down in a mindless political fury and then the imperial Hunnish army would intervene and forty-three men would be left lying in the mud, simply because some imperial drunk of an officer felt inclined to shoot? All the histories of the various outstanding Blitvinian personalities over the last hundred years tell us ever the same thing: that an individual may hang himself in the toilet by his own braces, out of shame at having sold himself as an informer to foreign powers, because, as the most popular tribune of the people, he had declaimed for years and from his own balcony the thousand-year cultural mission, when the citizens came under his windows, as to the Hunnish father of the nation and mayor of Blitvas-Holm.³ What this moral misery drove to such a revolting death was the specter of the Blitvinian question, which pene-

³ Nielsen is alluding to the suicide of a well-known Blitvinian politician of the 1890s, Petersen [Author's footnote].

trated the dying Blitvinian patriots from head to toe, like an uneasy conscience, like the reflex of a suppressed and rejected feeling that was powerful enough to disturb people even on their deathbed. Why did Larsen hang himself? Because he realized that to make pictures in Blitva meant madness. The great men of Blitva who received the recognition of the Ingermanlandish, Aragon, or Hunnish powers because their patriotic greatness answered in every way the criteria laid down by foreign laws, were recognized by foreign powers and by high school textbooks as "Blitvinian giants" simply because they bore their political convictions within the framework of imposed loyalties, which, in truth, meant to be an informer, a perjurer, and a traitor to the true Blitvinian national feeling and civil dignity. To wear a decoration in Blitva was a national shame, while to end on the gallows was the poets' ideal. Who does not recall those Blitvinian renegades and corrupted cavaliers who played the role of provincial grand seigneurs, representing, in reality, the act of taking refuge from their own consciences in a semiliterate cynicism, in cards and alcohol. Under the pressure of centuries, the Blitvinian man was deformed. He moved about the world like a caricature of all human concepts. He had to choose between madness and drowning, whether to sell himself or take to drink and generally perish morally the moment he received a professorship or any other high Hunnish rank, as a sinecure, in return for the betrayal of Blitva's interests. The only music of Blitvinian civil careers was the whistles of the street accompanied by the stink of rotten eggs on ministers' top hats. Small, backward, uncultured towns and the narrow petit bourgeois conditions in these Blitvinian provincial backwaters gave birth to small people, and were any to outgrow these domestic, local Blitvinian standards, they would flee abroad or — surrendering to the force of circumstances — grow gray, be broken, and remain crushed at the mercy of everything. Except for quite weak and uninteresting lyricism and subjective resignation, everything else in Blitva was known as: my daily bread, my pension, my family. And for that bread, for that pension, and for that family the rebellious cosmic and social revolutionary poets, as, for example, Horetzki, wore the imperial tricorne hat of Aragon with its plumage and shamelessly wrote monographs for schools concerning the imperial Aragon Pantocrator, Menelaus the Last, dedicating their books to the national tyrants and Hunnish governors, while constantly voting in public elections for antinationalist candidates and saving themselves from reality in a wondrous dream of the Karabaltic mission of the Pan-Blitvinian movement, which at that time they were founding throughout the entire Karabaltic of the Ingermanlandish turnverein, forever singing the old Blitvinian hymn "Heh, Blitvinians!"

Regarding this politically and economically so often wrongly yet so often precisely formulated and wittily defined foreign political pressure, "the Blitvinian question" appeared as a chaotic and vague state of facts, ever changing their form and direction. Upon this dynamic Blitvinian question were born, nurtured, and arose: Flaming-Sandersen, the great ideologue of the second half of the nineteenth century; Muzhikovski, the leader and president of the last parliamentary government, who was physically liquidated by Colonel Kristian Barutanski in his Christmas coup of 1925; Bauer-Kmetynis, deputy chief of the Agrarians, now abroad; and finally, last but not least, Colonel Kristian Barutanski himself, who, with his legions created Blitva and who is on the shortest way, together with his legions, to destroying it.

When (during the final prewar phase) Blitvinian politics were under Muzhikovski, everything resembled a balalaika more than it did politics. The "Blitvinian question" of that political period appeared in the flats of the petit bourgeoisie as the lithographed princess Tugomila, a prisoner in the Weider-Hunnen fortress, sending a dove from her cell to Blitva: "Oh, had I but the pinions of a dove, I would fly away with you to Blitva." Now as a forbidden banner in an obscure bookshop window, now as a broken window-pane in the Hunnophile flats of a Blitvinian national renegade, now as the corpse of a rebellious peasant who desired to remove the Hunnish flag from the railway station roof, "the Blitvinian question" constantly appeared in the press as censored news, or before the green cloth of justice as an offense in the sense of the Hunnish imperial and royal laws. Or some apprentice was arrested for spilling ink over a notice in a foreign language, or some high school kid was expelled from all the Blitvinian high schools for splashing a classmate for being a political rascal, or the police with their bare sabers cut down school-boys when they publicly set fire to foreign banners on the square. Strikes, bloodshed at elections, bloodstained demonstrations, public unrest, constant murmuring in Blitvinian jails when through those miserable apartments passed processions of patriots, convinced that in this way they were promoting the Blitvinian cause from its state of torpor. In that tragically static moment in Blitvinian political awareness, at that politically crucial point when Blitva's power to resist was at its lowest, people's brains in the kingdom of Blitva were overcome by apathy, so that everything dissolved in a universal miasma of memory. The Blitvinians forgot everything, even their own name! Processions of emigrants crossed the seas and there, from another shore, sprouted so-called freedom-loving Blitvinian newspapers, illiterate stammering, pathetic, but borne along by some definite ideal resistance, by a heroic denial of the injustice which, after centuries-long suffering, deserved to be

dispensed with. In the body of the Aragon Empire, this “Blitvinian question” (a mere detail of all such similar questions in Yenisey, in the Caucasus, in the Kara-baltic, and in Ister⁴), in its struggle with the gendarmerie, with the Hunnish school, with imperial scholarships, with exceptionally tedious and practical-joking laws limiting the Blitvinian representative body, the *zemstvo*, vegetated in the form of a poverty-stricken and backward press, like an illiterate brochure, like a lost case concerning press laws, like an empty speech at an election meeting held in a smoky bar, when the elective consciousness of various Blitvinian fellow citizens was at such a low ebb that it could be purchased for a mug of beer and a stinking Hunnish *pörkölt*.⁵ At that time a single political vote could decide the fate of the imperial mandate and, for this reason, at elections to the Blitvinian *zemstvo* there was often shooting, in an attempt to kill those two or three patriotic electors whom the powers that were knew to be incorruptible and who would vote for “Blitvinian rights.”

It presents a strange and fantastic question: What was the power of this worn, contemptible, obscure, and ridiculous “Blitvinian question,” that it succeeded in not perishing and was able to maintain itself in conflict with immeasurably superior powers? In the shadow of this tricky question were innumerable lost battles. Many broken individuals surrendered unconditionally. Many a renegade concealed his so-called ideals and sold himself to “those in power” (as was said in the style of that time “for a mess of pottage”). The defeats of the Blitvinian movement were all the more seriously silhouetted against the horizon. In Europe everything grew ever darker. Coping with the Blitvinian muddles grew ever more intricate, and it is no wonder that individuals began to feel complete apathy, exactly similar to the despair of bankruptcy and of suicide everything ruined and everything sealed! Blitva, with its chances of liberation, could take its place in a respectable coffin at a second-class funeral, light two historical candles, cross its tired hands under Jarl’s tower, where, for centuries, all Blitva’s hopes and all its ideals slept their eternal sleep. Nobody in the whole of Blitva believed in the liberation and resurrection of the Blitvinian state, except for high school kids, and these loyal and hotheaded kids Barutanski recruited into his brigade, and when, by the concatenation of international events, one day in ‘17 he appeared in the Beauregard palace as the Lord Protector Republicae Blithuaniae, all the rubbish of the Blitvinian intelligentsia swam with him on the crest of a wave of Blitvinian megalomania, avengism, irredentism, great Blitvinian and Pan-

⁴ Ancient Greek name for the Danube [Translator’s note].

⁵ A spicy Hungarian stew [Translator’s note].

Karabaltic programs, having before their eyes a single "ideal" which, at that time, took on a realistic, earthly form: the ideal of a profitable and distinguished ministerial wallet. Experience proved that the concept of Blitva meant, apart from "ideals," good and lucrative business according to all the laws of international roulette, which is known as the policy of the Great Powers.

The dramatic side of this patriotic wheeling and dealing may be seen in the first part of this medieval play, in which the main roles are played by two heroic characters, two childhood friends: Colonel Barutanski, the commandant of Blitva, and Dr. Nielsen, a neurotic, European-educated intellectual, of whom Kerinis, paid to dispatch him to another world, is known to have said, without a wink of an eye: "I'll kill this silly fool who doesn't know what he wants himself." Kerinis, in the third book of this Blitvinian poem, will travel to finish off this animal on the run, but will become the victim of his own noble and heroic act. This, how Dr. Nielsen changes from a sentimental bungler into a man who "knows what he wants" and how, on his path, like a burning fuse, he becomes the fatal destroyer of human lives, will be shown in this story, whose first chapter opens now, on the next page. *Incipit comoedia blithuanica!*

Translated by Edward Dennis Goy and Jasna Levinger-Goy in Miroslav Krleža, *The Banquet in Blitva* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2004), pp. 5–13

ALEKSANDER KAMIŃSKI: STONES FOR THE RAMPART

Title: *Kamienie na szaniec* (Stones for the rampart)

Originally published: Warsaw, Tajne Wojskowe Zakłady Wydawnicze – Komisja Propagandy Biura Informacji i Propagandy Komendy Głównej AK, 1943

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from J. Gorecki [Aleksander Kamiński], *Stones for the Rampart. The Story of Two Lads in the Polish Underground Movement*, with a foreword by Percy Hugh Beverley Lyon, M.C., M.A. (published as the 12th volume of Polish Boy Scouts' and Girl Guides' Library, London: Polish Boy Scouts' and Girl Guides' Association, 1945), pp. 58–68.

About the author

Aleksander Kamiński [1903, Warsaw – 1978, Warsaw]: writer and propagator of scouting. Kamiński spent his childhood in Ukraine, after which he studied history and archaeology in Warsaw. In the inter-war period, he was one of the leaders of the Polish scout movement (*Związek Harcerstwa Polskiego*, the ZHP). During the Second World War, Polish scouting continued its activity as a clandestine organization – the 'Grey Ranks' within the *Armia Krajowa* (Home army, thereafter AK). Kamiński worked for the AK, being responsible for 'small sabotage' operations as well as for information and propaganda activities of the Warsaw division. The main agenda of the underground Polish state serving this purpose was the *Biuro Informacji i Propagandy AK* (Information and propaganda bureau of the Home Army), led by Polish intellectuals, among which many, such as Tadeusz Manteuffel, Aleksander Gieysztor and Stefan Kieniewicz, became prominent historians in the post-1945 period. After 1945, with the exception of the Stalinist era (1948–1956) when Polish authorities banned the scouts and installed a Soviet-type pioneer movement, Kamiński worked for the ZHP and lectured on pedagogy in Łódź. After 1956, he published books about the German occupation and the small sabotage operations as well as works on pedagogy and scouting. His impact on the national literary canon is restricted to his best-known book, *Stones for the rampart*.

Main works: *Antek cwaniak* [Tony, the smart] (1932); *Książka wodza zuchów* [The book of the Scouts' chief] (1933); *Kamienie na szaniec* [Stones for the rampart] (1943); *"Zośka" i "Parasol"* (1957).

Context

During the Second World War, Polish lands were under the occupation of Nazi Germany. This implied that certain groups within society were to be eliminated, first and foremost Europe's largest Jewish community. At the same time, German troops and the police virtually decimated the Polish intelligentsia, aiming to reduce the country to a source of forced labor. The entire cultural and political life of the country was abruptly put to a halt. The Polish underground government resisted the German regime not only through various military activities, but also through propaganda (addressed to Polish society, Western public opinion and even to the Germans). It also succeeded in uniting most of the political spectrum (with the exception of the communists) and unifying party militias in a quasi all-national 'Home Army'. Kamiński's text represents one of the most successful attempts to popularize the idea of resistance in Poland and the West.

The unusual trajectory of this book is even more striking if we take into consideration the circumstances of its publishing. Kamiński wrote 'Stones for the rampart' in 1943. The book was published as a *samizdat*, and republished in 1944, winning considerable popularity despite lacking the means of normal marketing. The excerpt included here is from its first English translation from 1945, with a foreword by Hugh Lyon, headmaster of Rugby School. It is striking to see how the initial idea of scouting was reinterpreted by Kamiński: the scouts were praised for their fidelity towards the ideals of the movement, for which they were ready to fight and die.

While 'Stones for the rampart' tried to reinterpret the very idea of scouting according to the experience of war, it also drew upon important traditional features of Polish 'Romantic' patriotism. It raised the question of young men's sacrifice for national values, while displaying important traces of romantic messianism. The title of the book is a quotation from a poem by Juliusz Słowacki. A short fragment contains the outlines of the whole story:

*"I implore the still living not to lose hope,
But, when the time comes, to go forth to their death
Like stones thrown by God upon a great rampart."*

The outlook presented in the book is also connected to the debate on the meaning of the 1944 Warsaw uprising, fought predominantly by young people and teenagers. After its suppression, the organizers faced strong criticism, whereby they were accused of "shooting with diamonds," referring to the

sacrifice of the nation's young elites in the name of inconcrete, unrealistic aims and spiritual values such as honor and freedom. At the same time, the political leaders of the uprising were criticized for their apparent indifference to the fate of Warsaw's civilians, suffering not only from heavy fighting in the city but also from the brutality of the German and collaborative Russian units suppressing the resistance. At the same time, the uprising triggered an unofficial cult that reached its peak at the beginning of the twenty-first century, receiving eventually state support and uniting the right wing of the political spectrum along its symbolic heritage.

The book was based on a true story. Kamiński describes various clandestine activities of his younger friends. The central theme of the story refers to the attempt to set free a young fighter from a German prison. The attempt was successful but Rudy, the imprisoned partisan, died at the end of the operation. He had been tortured but had not betrayed his friends. The story was filmed in the 1970s but the actual protagonists, who had not survived the occupation, could not comment on its artistic version.

After 1945, Kamiński's book shared the fate of other works of the non-communist underground. In the first years of communist rule, it was criticized for glorifying stupidity and the manipulation of young, inexperienced people by the 'reactionary' political leaders of the underground state. Afterwards, during the entire Stalinist period, any public debate on this topic (among many others) was silenced. Together with the Polish scout movement, the book was legalized after 1956. From that point, it served as one of the main Polish narratives of the Second World War, appealing to sentiments of national heroism as well as contributing to symbolical self-victimization. Until recently 'Stones for the rampart' was compulsory reading, however, due to its questionable artistic quality and notorious didacticism it never attracted voluntary readers. The conservative turn of the Polish public discourse in the early twenty-first century brought it back to life, together with an extensive evocation of the symbolic heritage of the wartime underground state.

MG

Stones for the rampart. The story of two lads in the Polish underground movement

Now everything was ready. Near the intersections of Bielańska and Długa Streets, amidst the crowd of passers-by and idlers, none but a practised eye would have distinguished three detachments of the Polish Armed Forces.

Two armed with grenades and revolvers, the third with bottles of petrol. In ruined houses near by were a few tommy-guns. Out in the center the young man who was in command of the operation kept his hand in his pocket, on the butt of his loaded revolver. Five o'clock was approaching. It was the first time the young man had found himself in such a situation, and he was anxious, not at the prospect of the coming fight, but because he saw that the lad who was stationed down the street to give warning of the approach of the van was standing with his back to the point he was supposed to observe. But suddenly the lad on look-out turned quickly round and began to wave his hat. The leader put a whistle to his lips and gave a short sharp blast, noticeable only by those who were waiting for it. [...]

At that moment the prison-van came by. The driver evidently grasped that something was afoot, for he stepped on the gas and tried to turn along Nalewki. But it was too late. Young men leapt in front of the van, the crash of breaking bottles was heard, and in a moment the bonnet and engine were a mass of flames, which spread with lightning rapidity to the driver's seat. The driver instinctively jammed on the brakes, and the van skidded to a standstill under the arcade of the Warsaw Arsenal. A couple of *Gestapo* men leapt from the burning seat, and an SS officer rushed up from the direction of Nalewki. It was just there that Wojtek's party of grenade men were posted. The SS man managed to draw his revolver and shouted something in German. But Wojtek slowly and calmly took aim at him and fired. The German fell dead.

The men who had leapt from the van began to fire nervously and inaccurately; they were answered with shots from the Polish side. A sharp burst of fire came from the gun in the ruins. At the end of a few minutes three figures in German uniform were lying in the roadway, one of them in flames. Wojtek opened the door of the van, and the prisoners, dumbfounded at first, now made a rush to get out, trampling on the half-unconscious young man who was lying on a stretcher. Not till the whole body of 25 miraculously liberated prisoners had extricated themselves from the van did anyone notice Czarny, crawling on all fours from under the benches.

"There he is! There he is!" a joyful shout went up. "There's Czarny!"

Filled with joy and excitement as they were, they failed to notice the greenish-yellow color of Czarny's face, his fallen cheeks, the great pouches under his eyes, his blue lips, and his large, wide-open staring eyes. They took him on their shoulders and carried him to their waiting car. He groaned with pain. The car moved off, while his friends, still paying no attention to the rescued man, reloaded the magazines of their guns. Only when this was done

did they turn smiling to Czarny. He looked at them with his great open eyes. A smile lit his face despite the cramp of pain. He took his friend's hand in his own and held it fast. His own hands were black and swollen. "Stach!" he whispered. "O Stach, if you only knew!"

The intersection of streets in front of the Arsenal was empty—completely empty. [...] And on this scene of one of the most noted achievements of the Polish Underground Forces looked down the ancient walls of the Warsaw Arsenal, which had witnessed Kościuszko's Insurrection and the November Rising of 1831.

The various sections of the detachment, which had rescued the prisoners, left the scene of action by various streets. Wojtek at the head of his grenade-throwers went quickly along Długa Street in the direction of Miodowa Street. They passed the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, now housing the German *Arbeitsamt*. In the door were a few German officials, who had heard the firing near the Arsenal and had seen a portion of the action. When Wojtek was twenty paces away they opened fire.

"Get under cover of the wall!" Wojtek shouted to his men, while he himself took a grenade from his pocket and rushed straight for the doorway. He heard the swish of bullets. When he had all but reached the gateway he felt a violent blow in his stomach. So violent that he doubled up, turned round, and fell on the sidewalk. He felt his clothes with his left hand and found them wet with blood.

His mind dwelt for only a fraction of a second on his wound, and then concentrated on the doorway, from which more shots were fired. "They will do for all of us if we don't fight our way through," it flashed through his head as he realized that retreat towards the Arsenal was impracticable. He took out two grenades from his pocket, unfastened the safety catches of each in turn, and hurled them into the doorway. The noise of the explosions, and shortly after the groans of the wounded, showed that they had reached their mark. [...]

Wojtek did not realize how seriously he was wounded, and in what danger he was. He felt pain, it is true, but his state of mind was so bright and cheerful, and he thought of Czarny's rescue and the successful action so exciting, that he wanted to talk about it increasingly. Moreover, he was very pleased with himself. Those two grenades thrown into the *Arbeitsamt* doorway must have settled a number of Germans, and had opened the way for his men to escape. It would have been pretty serious if they had failed to fight their way through.

The doctors who were called in looked grave after making their examination of the patient. An immediate operation did not lead to any improvement in his condition.

Yet Wojtek still felt bright and cheerful. Despite increasing pain he was merry and full of life. He was constantly receiving visits from friends, or near relations, or Zosia. [...]

His temperature rose and he grew very weak. When he was alone with one of his family he asked for his purse. From one of its side pockets he took out a little card, on which Zosia had written the prayer Wojtek liked most.

"Who puts himself under the guardianship of the Lord and trusts Him sincerely with his whole heart may boldly say: 'God is my refuge. I shall have no fear.'"

Wojtek listened to the words of the Psalm and smiled. It was hard to believe, but despite his sufferings Wojtek continued to feel very happy.

Death? It was most improbable that this time it would pass him by. But if it came—it must come. Let it come quickly. He was quite ready to receive the Angel of Death. He had thought of her already so many hundred times that he was always ready to receive her. He had become accustomed to her, and looked on her as a friend. He had played his part. Had played it as well as ever he could. That was the most important thing. And besides, he was on such friendly terms with God.

"Hallo, how is Czarny going on?" he asked in so weak a voice that Zdzich had to bend over to hear.

It was plain enough that the end might come at any time. The news spread with lightning rapidity among his friends, in whom it produced a feeling of depression and almost of despair. Their dearest friend was leaving them and they were helpless.

Wojtek lost consciousness—and passed. He had understood now that the drama of his life was reaching its end. He had understood, but had not ceased to smile. What a marvelous play it had been!

Meanwhile in another part of the city Czarny was lying amid his friends. Those around him changed from time to time: his nearest relations, or his friends; but one person never left his beside, and that was Stach.

Czarny's condition was dreadful. It had been difficult to undress him and get him to bed. He could not bear to be touched. [...]

"I had one moment of great satisfaction at Szucha Prison." said Czarny. "That was when the examining *Gestapo* man shouted at me: 'You Polish bandit! Why do you look like that?' and then turned to the others and went on in German: 'He has the face and expression of a born bandit.'"

Hours and days passed. After a time the truth, which all strove to dismiss from their minds, became too evident. Czarny's condition left no hope. Czarny died.

When the end was near he was too intelligent not to realize that his fate was irrevocably sealed. [...]

Once when he felt a certain temporary relief, a short interval free from pain, one of his friends began to recite the poem "Jubilee," about how it will be in ten years' time; but Czarny stopped him with a smile: "Slowly, fellows, quietly!" and waved his hand.

Presently he said: "As we're talking of poetry, Janek, repeat those marvelous lines of Słowacki's ...

Silence fell, and Janek, striving to control his voice, recited Słowacki's "My Testament." Czarny held Stach's hand in his own and repeated in a whisper with blue lips that most wonderful verse:

*"I implore the still living not to lose hope,
But, when the time comes, to go forth to their death
Like stones thrown by God upon a great rampart."*

Czarny and Wojtek both died the same day. [...]

In requital for the torture of Czarny during his examination, the Staff of the Underground Army ordered the "liquidation" of the two *Gestapo* men who had most distinguished themselves by their brutality: Schultz and Lange. [...]

Our story ends here, although underground activities go on, and the struggle is continued. Inexorable justice is slowly but irrevocably bringing its avenging hand to the throat of the Criminal Nation, and to those of the beasts in human form who for centuries have composed the morally undeveloped German community.

But although underground activities are going on, although the friends of Wojtek and Czarny and tens of thousands of their comrades in arms have scarcely yet begun their reply to the enemy's vileness and bestiality, this story must for the time being be brought to an end.

A story of high ideals of Comradeship and Service, and of people who exemplified them in their deaths, as they had done in their lives.

Translator not indicated

IOANNIS PSICHARIS: MY JOURNEY

Title: *Τό ταξίδι μου* (My journey)

Originally published: Αθήνα, n. p., 1888

Language: Greek

The excerpts used are from Ιωάννης Ψυχάρης, *Τό ταξίδι μου*, ed. by Alkis Agelou (Athens: Έστία: Νεοελληνική Βιβλιοθήκη, 1993), pp. 37–39, 64–67, 75–76, 89.

About the author

Ioannis (Jean) Psicharis [1854, Odessa – 1929, Paris]: writer, linguist and critic. Psicharis was born to a well-off family. After his mother's early death his father brought him to Istanbul in 1860, where he spent his childhood. His native language was Russian and it was only in Istanbul that he studied French and Greek at the French Lycée Bonaparte. In 1869, he left for Marseille to conclude his high school education. From there, he moved to Paris to study literature at the Sorbonne, to Bonn where he studied medieval and German literature, and back to Paris, where he specialized in modern Greek literature and linguistics at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes*. In 1884, he was appointed lecturer of Greek literature and linguistics at the same school. He soon married Ernest Renan's daughter Noemi, whom he divorced in 1892. He was also in close contact with writers such as Victor Hugo, Leconte de Lisle and Hyppolite Taine. In 1904, after the death of his mentor Emile Legrand (1841–1903), a major figure in modern Greek philology, he succeeded him as a professor of linguistics at the *Ecole des langues orientales vivantes*, where he taught medieval and modern Greek. In 1886 he visited Greece for the first time. Before visiting Athens, he traveled to Istanbul, to represent the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes* at the conference of the *Ελληνικός Φιλολογικός Σύλλογος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* (Greek philological society of Constantinople). It is exactly this trip that he described in his 'My journey.' After this, he returned to Greece several more times. Psicharis began writing while he was a student. In his work, he sought to connect his literary activity to the creation of modern Greek literature and the reconstruction of intellectual life in Greece. The main instrument to this effect, he believed, was a simple and flexible language. He thus became the major figure of the first phase, the so-called literary phase, of the demoticist movement. His basic principle on the 'Language Question' was that in order to develop culturally, the Greek nation needs to have its own language. This language would be the one used by the people itself, which was not vulgar as the purists claimed. His purpose was to consolidate demotic (from the ancient

word *demos*, meaning ‘the people’) as the language of education and science. When Psicharis shook the stagnant Athenian literary circles, many saw him as a prophet. However, his very polemical attitude regarding the ‘Language question’ caused fierce reactions. In particular, during the process of his being appointed to Legrand’s chair, Psicharis was fiercely attacked by a large part of the purist Greek press as being totally inappropriate to teach Modern Greek. Even after his appointment, there were vivid debates in the Greek Parliament and a request for a protest at the French government, which never materialized. In fact, the demotic version of Greek, which became established only with the 1976 Reform, was not the one proposed by Psicharis, but rather a compromised one. However, he is still considered to be the leading figure of Greek demoticism.

Main works: *Essai de phonétique néo-grecque* (1884); *Jalousie* (1884); *Essai de grammaire historique néo-grecque* (1886); *Tó ταξίδι μου* [My journey] (1888); *Etudes de philologie neo-grecque* (1892); *Tó όνειρο του Γιαννίρη* [Gianniri’s dream] (1897); *La croyante* (1899); *Ρόδα και Μήλα* 5 vols. [Roses and apples] (1902–1909), *Ζωή και αγάπη στή μοναξιά* [Life and love in solitude] (1904); *Τά δύο αδέρφια* [The two brothers] (1911); *Le crime de poète* (1913).

Context

During the 1870s and 1880s, the reforms introduced by successive governments of the most important nineteenth century Greek politician, Harilaos Trikoupi, had brought new hope for the future of Greek society. Despite the alienation of the rural population, these reforms encouraged various groups in the urban centers to participate in political and intellectual life. The intellectual atmosphere of the 1880s was also marked by **Nikolaos Politis**’s contributions to the study of folk culture. Moreover, Athens witnessed the emergence of a new generation, the so-called ‘Athenian school of the 1880s,’ which abandoned the austere classicism of the post-revolutionary period. Instead, the group adopted the Herderian concept of the nation and sought to explore the authentic culture and the language of the people. As a result, this generation dropped *καθαρεύουσα* (katharevousa) and expressed itself in the demotic idiom. Figures such as Costis Palamas (1859–1943), Georgios Drosinis (1859–1951), Argyris Eftaliotis (1849–1923) were among its main representatives. This literary regeneration coincided with the development of critical attitudes in the local press, which brought literary issues to the attention of a broader audience.

It has been argued that, after its emancipation from the didactic character it had inherited from the eighteenth century, modern Greek prose witnessed three important moments during the nineteenth century. The first was the publishing of *Papatrechas* by **Adamantios Korais**. The second one was the

novel *Πάπισσα Ιωάννα* (Popess Johanna), written in 1866, by Emmanouil Roidis (1836–1904), the radical intellectual who also commented extensively on contemporary political and intellectual life. The third one was ‘My journey’ by Psicharis. The connection among the three authors was that all of them originated from the Aegean island of Chios, a vibrant commercial center at the time. More importantly, they were Greeks of the diaspora. What was crucial, however, in their intellectual accomplishment was that their work coincided with significant moments in the transformation of Greek cultural identity. In his novel, Korais found the opportunity to comment on the educational flaws faced by the nation on the eve of its uprising. Roidis, in his conflict with the Holy Synod of the Greek Church instigated by ‘Popess Johanna,’ pursued not only literary, but also social agendas. Finally, Psicharis appeared at a moment when conditions looked favorable for a resolution of the ‘Language Question.’

Psicharis had espoused radical views on language even before ‘My journey.’ In 1885, he published his *Essai de grammaire historique néo-grecque*, where he pointed out that he saw no point in discussing which would be the most appropriate writing language, since there was only one language used in everyday life. He concluded that “**Solomos** did not need advice in order to create the most beautiful verses that Greece could be proud of.”

For Psicharis, the demotic language had acquired national dimensions. He argued, on the one hand, that it could liberate his compatriots from archaisms. On the other hand, it would offer them the competence to develop a national literature, which would determine the cultural boundaries of the nation. He realized though that in order to attract the broader public, he had to use easily recognizable terminology. The first one is *Romiosini* (the Greek-Orthodox definition of the nation), and the terms *Grekos/Romios* (see **Rigas Velestinlis**, *New political constitution*) in order to underline his dismay for the identification of the Greek state with the ancient Hellenic cultural entity. Moreover, he often employed the term ‘Idea,’ a word that resonated well with the ‘Great Idea,’ which, in its turn, appealed to the Greek audiences, as it connoted a fervent hatred of the Turks, a sentiment which he describes as the most enduring element of Greek identity.

The publication of ‘My journey’ itself would not have had any significant repercussions, had not the language of the text been conceived by the author as a strong statement. The demotic language was used in an academically pretentious and meticulous manner, and readjusted according to morphological rules, which Psicharis had mastered as a linguist. His effort to impose these rules to any idiomatic case led him to exaggeration. He also chose very

carefully the genre which would be more appropriate for his manifesto. He did not wish to write a novel, since he believed that this genre was not yet mature in the Greek context. He needed a genre which would permit him to express his theoretical views on the 'idea.' At the same time, he found it appealing to move between reality and imagination.

'My journey' came as a surprise to the Greek audiences. Psicharis had published mainly in French and nobody had used this style ever before. It has been argued that even if Psicharis had not produced anything after 'My journey,' he would have lost nothing from his central historical role. Despite the fact that 'My journey' was received enthusiastically by many contemporary demoticists, such as the poet Costis Palamas and the novelist Constantinos Hatzopoulos (1868–1920), one of the pioneers of socialism in Greece, it also triggered fervent debate. The best known was the one between Psicharis and the famous German Byzantinist and professor of medieval and modern Greek language and literature in Munich Karl Krumbacher (1856–1909), on the one hand, and Georgios Hatzidakis (see **Nikolaos Politis**, *Study on the life of modern Greeks*), one of the most impassioned supporters of *καθαρεύουσα*, on the other. During the first years of the century, the demoticist movement began to develop more systematically. The publication of the journal *Νοῦμᾶς*, directed by Dimitris Tagopoulos (1867–1926), supported by Psicharis himself, gathered many of the demoticists, as well as socialist intellectuals such as **Georgios Skliros**, around it.

VK

My journey

A few words

Whosoever reads me will understand my purpose for writing 'My Journey.' Language and homeland are the same. To fight for one's homeland or for the national language is one and the same struggle. One is always defending one's homeland. [...]

I have no language of my own and I did not create a language, for I am no maker. I write in the *common* language of the people; when our demotic language hasn't a word we need, I take the word from the ancient language and try, as much as possible, to match it to the grammar of the people. That is how it was done by all the nations of the world; that is how it shall be done by us. It seems to me that this is the first time, in this book, that the language of the people is written with a certain order and unity. I tried to write it prop-

erly, preserving its rules, paying attention to the phonology, morphology, forms and syntax of demotic grammar.

I am not so young, I am not such a child as to think that with this book of mine I have solved the problem which torments us all. In order to solve it, much is still needed. First, each one should sit and correctly learn this language which he holds in contempt without knowing it; grammar books must be written so that our true language, and not only *katharevousa*, is taught in our schools and in university. In fact, we must better study the ancient language, so as to understand the historical value of the demotic; we must study it with respect and see that it is only the demotic which it is possible for us to cultivate and write. I have tried to show that one can also write prose in this language. I say openly and with all my heart, if my book is not good, it is my fault; it is not the fault of the language. [...]

None of what I say in my book ever happened in truth. Truth is only the hatred every Greek feels for the Turk and the love he feels for his homeland and for the language his mother spoke to him as a child. Never in my life have I paid much attention to individuals; only man, the idea and the mind have some worth in the world. General matters are the only important matters. For this, where I write *I*, it is a form of rhetoric; *I* am nothing; the national soul means something; I have tried to see, from time to time, what this soul holds inside itself, and speaking about myself, I think of others. My book is a fairytale, not a journey. [...]

Constantinople and Constantinopolitans

[...] Constantinopolitans have another system. Constantinopolitans live, as much as they can, fraternally with the Turks and try to govern them—or, in other words, to have a hold on them. At first, they somehow managed to do this; but now their system is more difficult for them. Nowadays Europe is also mixed up in their business and she also wants to have her say. What are our unfortunate Greeks to do? What is one to do, when one hasn't a rifle? You might say: "He buys one!" Yes! That is my thought too. But this is Europe we're talking about! What will our people do with Europe if they go and buy rifles? What do you think of that statement? It seems to be right. Whatever one is used to! If, at the outset, the Constantinopolitan had become angry, if now he preferred death to slavery, then who knows? Today Europe would not have the chance to say a word. But on the other hand, you must reckon that not a single Greek might be left alive.

It seems that that is how the Constantinopolitans reasoned, and it seems that they reasoned famously, for they never stirred. Fellows, what can I tell you? I have a great weakness for you and I don't like accusing you. You yourselves will say that I did not let out half your failings. Suddenly one day you may complain and say that I praised you excessively. What can I do? I was one of you myself. Let's cover some of them up. That is how they wished it; that is how they went about it; that is what suited their temperament. There was plenty of squabbling, and pettiness and theological disputes; as long as they sat in their corner. And yet, without much flattery, without displaying more humility than was fitting, with their sense of honor, with their good sense, with their intellect, with their sound judgment, they succeeded in making the Turk listen to them, respect them, and sometimes even to fear them—and, lastly, and this must be said, they always sustained Hellenism. The great Uprising did not leave them unaffected; this was where the fire became red-hot; the spark lay hidden in all hearts and together they nurtured it lest it went out.

For now, the Constantinopolitan quietly awaits for his master to fall on his own. He knows that the Greek, and only the Greek, will stay in the land forever and will never budge from Constantinople. That is enough for him. An old boatman, who used to take me every day to Phanari¹, once said to me: "Boss, the Turks have been crushed mightily." "My son," I replied, "in time they will be crushed even more; one day you will see them so crushed, that they will be thrown into the sea. But what difference will it make to you? It is not you they will make king, nor me. You will have another master." "Don't you worry, Boss; he too will be crushed!"

What my good boatman said was what everyone feels inside. That is what they reckon. That is why you see them slowly working towards that end. They have commerce in the palm of their hand; they have the greatest power on earth: money. They also cultivate letters; every now and then they learn a bit of Greek; they rejoice and preen because they think they know Greek. They love learning; they build loads of schools and they want them both good and luxurious. They spend masses of money to build four schools where one would be enough. Even the poorest among them will give something from his pocket.

Thus are our good Constantinopolitans governed, thus do they live, thus do they die. Now and then they'll say to you: "The development of letters

¹ *Tur.* Fener, a district on the south shore of the Golden Horn where the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate moved at the end of the seventeenth century. The move was followed by large numbers of important families who became known as Phanariots.

was the major cause of the rebirth of Greece,” or “schools and education ceaselessly nurture patriotism,” and many other such things, which other people say elsewhere, and will go on saying for years. But our good Constantinopolitans are mistaken and are wrong to say so. Not only do schools not nurture patriotism, but they exterminate it; they almost wiped it out completely. Schools grabbed up all the money, not leaving a penny for the army or the navy. Instead of arms, books; instead of soldiers, teachers. That is why Constantinopolitans sit reading while the Turk stands over their heads. He who learns how to read and write never picks up a rifle again. During the Revolution, the people were illiterate, but they were an illiterate lion. When the Turk took Constantinople, it was not with his wisdom that he took it. The Byzantines were wise. Now that the Greek knows more things, his sword has grown rusty; the pen is sovereign. [...]

So long as this barbarian lives, he who dampens my spirits and won't let me sleep at night! I don't care who destroys him; so long as he is destroyed! At first they had their greatness; now they have been reduced to being the jesters of Europe. From the moment they set foot upon this soil, they brought their curse with them. The Turk does not progress; he slaughters and stands still; he drowns in the blood he sheds. His religion is his first enemy; it does not allow him to go forward and it trips his feet. Woe to the Greek who does not understand this!

The Turk must either be all-powerful or he must be nothing—either a king or a slave. Let him then return to the red apple tree², since he can no longer rule the world. From where were they unleashed, from where did these barbarians come to Europe? Our soil does not bear them. They conquered and were conquered themselves. Even in the good they did us, they showed how dim-witted they are. In all of history we see and read that the conqueror's single concern, once he has taken a land, is to hold it firmly; he becomes one with the conquered and, in a few years, as in France, Germany, Russia, one can no longer distinguish one from the other. The conqueror is nurtured and made strong by the native's blood. They were never able to become a nation. They were blinded by fanaticism. Once the conqueror swept down, once he entered Constantinople, he separated the Turks from the Christians. He remained a for-

² *Gr. Κόκκινη μηλιά, Tur. Kızıl Elma*: According to the Greek tradition, it describes the legendary border in Eastern Asia Minor (Anatolia) that Turks crossed before flooding in the entire peninsula. According to the Turkish tradition, it refers to a prophecy of obscure origins prevalent among the Ottomans and centered around the idea of world domination. The Red Apple was identified with the successive goals of Ottoman conquest, particularly Constantinople and Rome.

eigner among them all. He was companion to no one and for four centuries we lived close to each other, like a dog lives with a cat. What a shame, though, that they were the dog—and that we didn't even prove to be a cat. [...]

Cabinet de lecture

[...] Yes! Now, for the first time, I have understood the system of our newspaper writers and their system seems to me useful and simple. "Forget your Greek, both ancient and modern; only make sure you observe ancient forms. If you have learnt that the nominative *moussa* [muse] has a genitive form of *moussis* and not *moussas*, that the present tense of *akouo* [listen] is *ikousa* in the imperfect and *akikoa* in the present perfect, you immediately buy foreign newspapers; you translate them in a jiffy. Thus you ennoble the language. It doesn't matter if you write in Frankish, as long as you print in Greek. In this way, your words all appear Greek; inside, you are all Frankish. Don't ever neglect grammatical form in your life. You will have ruined everything if you don't pay attention to grammatical form!"

And do not think that our people are naive to go about it in this way. Our newspaper writers are not stupid; in fact, they are terrific diplomats. By writing in German, French and English, they cajole Europe; when Europe sees that we know and can write its language, it cannot but love us. And so one day it may give us Constantinople. In order, supposedly, for Europe not to take it amiss that we are seen avoiding foreign words like the plague and claiming that it is demeaning for both our language and nation to say *porta* instead of *thyra*, we have at least succeeded in making the words appear Greek, while the style and the meaning are Frankish [...].

Patriarchal affairs

[...] Wherever I go, whatever I do, whatever I come across, everywhere I see, everywhere I find the Turk. I need only open my eyes, I need only turn and look: everything reminds me of slavery. I went to Hagia Sophia and I had to put on Turkish shoes, in order to enter an Orthodox church. How was I to look and see the magnificence of art? The shoes I had on burned the soles of my feet and every hour I seethed inside; I kept wanting to hurl them in the face of the doorman.

I attended the *selamlık*³ and as I stood at a distance I saw a ravaged, ailing and ghostly-looking man hurrying by; it was the Sultan. I saw soldiers, offi-

³ The sultan's procession on his way to the Friday prayer.

cers, and generals in line and I said to myself: "There go the barbarians, tearing down the road." And as I watched them, I raised my eyes, pretending to look out for fiery lightning to suddenly fall from the quiet, cheerful sky.

I went with our good man O. to take a stroll through Vlacherna⁴ and ancient Byzantium. Our wise archaeologist kept telling me every so often: "This was a church and they turned it into a mosque; this was a palace and it has become a pigsty. I know, because I read the Turkish sign, above the door of the church, which says so, and because I have thrice read the Byzantine authors." While I listened to him, a terrible distress came over me. His words ate at me like a worm. My blood boiled and I recalled the first night I had laid myself down in Constantinople; I was bursting. I had to give vent to my anger.

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

⁴ The Palace of Vlacherna still lies in ruins on the western end of the Byzantine walls on the Golden Horn. It was built by Michael VIII Palaeologus who reconquered the city from the Latins in 1261 and was used by the imperial court throughout the late Byzantine period.

THE CZECH MODERN

Title: *Česká moderna* (The Czech modern)

Originally published: Prague, *Rozhledy*, 25 October, 1895

Language: Czech

The excerpts used are from Jaroslava Janáčková and Marie Lukešová eds., *Kniha textů: česká literatura od počátků k dnešku*, vol. II, *Od romantismu k symbolismu 19. století*, (Prague: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1999), pp. 619–622.

Context

The 1890s in Bohemia were characterized by far-reaching changes in political life as well as in the arts. These changes emerged in the wake of fast industrialization, economic boom and social differentiation in society. In the political sphere the liberal nationalist Young Czech Party reached the foremost position, to the detriment of the moderate liberal conservative ‘Old Czechs.’ Nonetheless, other political ideologies, from anarchism and socialism to agrarian movements and political Catholicism, were gaining support. The new generation organized itself in the so-called progressivist movement comprising mainly students, no less nationalist than their fathers. They sought, however, more insistently the democratization of public life which was often inspired by socialist ideas and the iconoclasm of the ‘realists’ grouped around **Tomáš G. Masaryk**. Their youthful radicalism clashed with the police and state administration, which found its climax in the trial of the so-called *Omladina* group in 1894 that ended up in the short-term jailing of many of the future leading politicians, journalists and writers. The cultural sphere was opened to all different kinds of *fin de siècle* artistic streams such as Art nouveau, Symbolism, Decadence, which were visible above all in architecture, plastic arts, and literature. Very divergent in nature, ideological inclination and artistic expression, ‘the generation of the 1890s’ had one common feature which was their repudiation of the old-fashioned patriotic art

of the 'national awaking,' which considered serving the national movement as the sacred task of the artist.

Instead of the unifying idea of art as a tool for national emancipation, they demanded freedom of artistic expression. This led to a blossoming of often short-lived groupings and cultural projects trying to react in their own right to the general feeling of crisis and loss of orientation. Their criticism in literature was directed against both the 1880s literary movements, the 'national school' led by Eliška Krásnohorská, which embodied the principle of the purposefulness of art, and the group around the journal *Lumír* headed by Jaroslav Vrchlický, whom the youngsters rejected for his alleged inclination to pure formalism. With the exception of the Decadents, however, the principle of individualism did not mean a refusal of the social engagement of the artist but rather the opposite. As one can see in the manifesto below, even though the young generation refused to promote the 'national idea,' it still shared the notion of an 'addressee' of art and was convinced of the usefulness and the educational role of art in the national community.

Among many groupings that appeared over the course of the last decade of the nineteenth century, the most expressive and influential program was presented by the so-called 'Czech Modern,' whose manifesto was published in 1895 in the journal *Rozhledy*, a prominent tribune of the ascending literary generation. The author of the first draft, the poet Josef Svatopluk Machar, formulated the manifesto in connection with the European modernist literary movement and in direct reference to Hermann Bahr. Important additions, though, were made by the future leading literary critic František Xaver Šalda. Of the twelve signatories, some were literary critics and writers (Šalda, F. V. Krejčí, Machar, Antonín Sova, Otakar Březina) while others represented 'realist' and 'progressivist' politics and journalism (Václav Choc, Eduard Kerner, Josef Pelcl, František Soukup). It was, however, literary critique that played the leading role. For them, the main principle in artistic creation was that of 'individualism,' that is the freedom of expression and the right for personal opinion that was to be the only true precondition for the creation of genuine art. They stressed the role of criticism, for they regarded their own time as a moment of fundamental cultural change in which 'critical activity,' equal to any other artistic expression, would help bring the 'new' to the world. At the same time, the 'literary modern' was in their eyes a complementary spiritual phenomenon to the 'political modern,' understood as a program of moderate socialist humanism. Thus the individualist starting point, valid in both arts and politics, was coupled by a respect for social needs. The manifesto criticized the political style of the nationalist Young Czech Party,

whose politicians supposedly sought power solely for their own benefit and ignored issues such as education, the rights of women, and other social questions. The 'Czech modern' condemned nationalism as well as other particularistic options in arts, refusing to assess the artistic work from the point of view of its 'Czechness.' In politics, on the other hand, they refused parties that represented particular social groups. The only arbiter in evaluating artistic production was originality, whereas national character was a natural given. Similar to Masaryk, they perceived politics to be a service to people promoting welfare and social cohesion.

The 'Czech modern,' due to the divergent political convictions and predilections (rather than the aesthetic inclinations) of its members, broke down immediately after their manifesto was published. It also aroused many critical reactions that either condemned the radical rhetoric of the manifesto—above all the total rejection of the older generations—or, conversely, its non-concrete, abstract formulations. Nevertheless, the 'Czech modern' was very soon understood to be the most important attempt towards an aesthetic and civic synthesis of the '1890s generation.' It was also regarded as one of the milestones of modern Czech culture, determining, in a way, the cultural and partly political agenda of the first decades of the twentieth century. As such, it has been a significant point of reference in Czech literary and social history up until today.

MK

The Czech modern

Banded together in a united front by the typical representatives of the old ways, compelled to defend its convictions, freedom of speech, the right to engage in ruthless criticism in the most intense and most passionate struggle that Czech literature has ever known, a group of the young generation has accepted the literary name that was hurled at it in contempt: Czech Modernism.

It was reproached for lacking good manners because it did not quietly join the older trend, because it does not acknowledge the old icons as sacred, because it scorns the authorities, because it does not respect the old fetishes: its revolutionary spirit was pilloried. These reproaches are just; it is proud of them. It feels that an unbridgeable abyss separates it from the older generation. It has rejected the well-traveled road and goes its own way. It will continue to hold to the principles that its people have advocated in different ways for several years now. The principles are the mortar that unites it.

In criticism, we want what we have fought for and what we have won: to have our convictions, freedom of speech and ruthlessness. Critical activity is creative, artistic and scholarly work, an independent literary genre equal to all the others. We want individuality. We want it in criticism and in art. We want artists, not echoes of foreign tones, not eclectics, not dilettantes. We do not respect the multicolored interweaving of borrowed ideas and styles, rhymed political programs, imitations of folksongs, versified trinkets of folklore, gray flag-wagging and realistic flat objectivity.

Individuality above all, bursting with life and creating life. Today, when aesthetics finds refuge only in secondary-school textbooks, when battles over the utility of art are ludicrously anachronistic, when everything old collapses into rubble and a new world begins, we ask of the artist: be yourself! We do not put any emphasis on the *Czech character*: be yourself and you will be Czech. Mánes, Smetana, Neruda¹, those purely Czech artists par excellence, for a good half of their lives were considered to be aliens who expressed themselves in Czech. We do not acknowledge nationality maps. We want an art that is not a luxury item and does not succumb to the changing whims of literary fashion. For us, modern is not what happens to be in fashion: the day before yesterday realism, yesterday naturalism, today symbolism, decadence, tomorrow Satanism, occultism, those ephemeral watchwords that always equalize and homogenize literary works for a few months and are aped by the literary fops. Artist! Put your blood, your mind and yourself into your work—you, your mind and your blood will live and breathe in it, and it will live through them. We want the truth in art, not a photograph of external reality, but that honest inner truth, whose only norm is its vehicle—the individual.

In this concerted endeavor for the new and the better, literary modernism and political modernism meet. Both of them spring from the same dispositions.

The present generation grew up with dismal prospects. Swept along by its attraction to commotion and life, it blindly swore allegiance to the flag of the party that seemed to usher in a new epoch in the history of the nation. This trust bore bitter fruit. Instead of intellectual sustenance, it was given plati-

¹ Important founding figures of the 'national school' in Czech arts and literature: Josef Mánes (1820–1871), Romantic painter of portraits, landscapes and historical paintings; Bedřich Smetana (1824–1884), composer best known for his cycle of symphonic poems *Má vlast* (My homeland) and his operas; Jan Neruda (1834–1891), journalist, writer and poet, prominent representative of nineteenth-century Czech realism.

tudes and more platitudes—while in the parliaments, at the rallies and in the party, there were daily proclamations about the high cultural level of the Czech people, public education, the demands of the era and rivaling the cultured nations. [...] Our fathers took up the legacy of the older party, the Old Czechs. We readily acknowledge that the Old Czechs achieved much in their work as educators. The Young Czechs either buried or sponged off the talents of the Old Czechs. Their work, however, will be remembered as a lean period in Czech cultural history.

We awoke and began to look after ourselves. We worked many years; to-day, we step forth in serried ranks.

Politics? We cannot believe that it should be, on the one hand, a kind of Machiavellian science, full of trafficking, trickery and masquerading and, on the other hand, a stage where applause, popularity, flowers, the kisses of bridesmaids and the enthusiasm of the nation are won.

Politics is difficult, strenuous work and nothing but work. Quiet work. Politics is not about getting oneself elected to Parliament. In politics, one does not begin to work only having won the mandate. One does not engage in political work only in Parliament.

Just as we want individualism in literature, we also demand it in politics. Let politics be pursued only by whole, refined individuals. Let the measure of their individuality be in direct proportion to the degree of their self-denial: nothing for themselves, everything for the cause.

In politics, we want to be above all *human beings* in the full sense of the word. All the rest follows from this. It follows from this that we look in a totally different way, positively, at the nationality question, a question galvanized and stoked by the governments that formulated it and invoked it in every war, in every bloodletting, just as religious sentiment was manipulated in similar cases in the Middle Ages. We are not afraid for our language. Our nationality is so secure that no power on earth can take it away from us. The preservation of our nationality is not an end in itself for us, but the means to higher goals. Therefore we condemn the brutality that is perpetrated by the Germans under the battle cry of nationalism, just as we would condemn it if it were perpetrated by Czechs. We likewise condemn the political parties that stoke the nationality question for the benefit of governments, thereby destroying the best powers of the nation. We will seek an understanding with our German countrymen; not at conference tables, not diplomatic alliances in parliaments, but an understanding on the field of humanity and—of the stomach. We are prepared for the eventuality that the old parties will use this very question to whip up the masses against us. We will withstand this onslaught.

An idea that is founded on integrity will not be trampled underfoot, shouted down or voted down.

As for the social question, we want 'to be above all human beings.' Do we include the workers in the nation? Even when they proclaim that they are international? Yes. Nationality is not the patent of the Young Czechs or the Old Czechs. Parties disappear, the nation remains. The present Young Czech delegation represents the Czech bourgeoisie and a portion of the farmers. It declares this openly. The proposal of universal suffrage was a move intended to embarrass the government. Now it is a waif whose own father does not dare to acknowledge it.

The bourgeoisie is the same all over Europe. Emancipated by the French Revolution, it soon forgot about the bitter fate of the oppressed. Uniting with the feudal lords and the farmers, who went through a similar school, it has taken a stand against the calloused pleading hands of the white slaves.

We want universal suffrage, not because we believe that it will change their sad condition, but because their fresh strength will lead the present parliamentarianism *ad absurdum*, something we long ago stopped expecting from the Young Czech delegation. Although it proudly calls itself the people's party, it has forgotten its mission and conformed according to the mood and conditions of the day; instead of criticizing, it negotiates; instead of working, it declaims.

We demand political work which will aim to spread affluence and social contentment to all spheres and classes. We demand the protection of all those working and suffering under the oppression of the powerful of this world. On principle, we demand access to cultural and social life for women as well.

Everywhere, on principle in politics as well, we declare ourselves to be against the parties that are conceived along military and ecclesiastical lines. Parties in this old sense are for us an instrument that is just as oppressive and crushing as governments. We value whole individuals higher than an abstract mass. Let the parties be an instrument of social progress, rather than an obstacle to it. To educate the people means to raise the individual to a full and vital degree of self-confidence and to destroy the sluggishness of apathetic adherence, all that easy cowardice, irresponsibility, lack of discernment and lack of principle, the belief that an idea, a mind, has no value in itself, but that only lazy bodies and voting hands are counted!

Translated by Kathleen Hayes

ARTUR GÓRSKI: YOUNG POLAND

Title: *Młoda Polska* (Young Poland)

Originally published: Cracow, *Życie* 1898, No. 15, 16, 18, 19, 24 and 25

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from Maria Podraza-Kwiatkowska ed., *Programy i dyskusje literackie okresu Młodej Polski* (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1973), pp. 96–125.

About the author

Artur Górski [1870, Cracow – 1959, Warsaw]: literary critic, writer and translator. As a graduate of law from Cracow University, Górski joined the Polish Socialist Party in 1892, but soon reverted to Catholicism. He put aside his political sympathies and concentrated on literary criticism, the theory of literature and translation (Goethe, Ibsen, and Kierkegaard). He represented the generation which called into question the political and cultural principles of positivism (see **Aleksander Świętochowski**, *Political directives*). As the canonizer of the literary program of the young and rebellious intelligentsia, he perfectly echoed the contemporary intellectual and political climate, characterized by the rapid political radicalization of the younger generation. An entire period of Polish literary history was named after his critical essay, 'Young Poland.' This period was characterized by the local appropriation of Western modernism, as well as an appeal to Polish Romanticism as a source of authentic 'great art.' The 'ideal enemies' of the new literary movement were the positivists, perceived as those who implemented social pedagogy instead of 'true art' that was to be postulated by the youth. None of Górski's other writings attracted comparable interest, and it should be stressed that his impact on modernist literature was less important than that of the poet Stanisław Przybyszewski or the literary theoretician Stanisław Brzozowski.

Main works: *Monsalvat. Rzecz o Adamie Mickiewiczu* [Monsalvat. Story of Adam Mickiewicz] (1908); *Ku czemu Polska szła* [Where was Poland heading] (1918); *Przed dniem* [Before the day] (1918); *Na nowym progu* [On the new threshold] (1918); *O wieszczaniu w sztuce* [On prophesizing in arts] (1920); *Chłop* [The peasant] (1922); *Głosy o ludziach i ideach* [Gloss on people and ideas] (1931); *Niepokój naszego czasu* [The anxiety of our times] (1938); *Rzecz o nadziei* [On hope] (1963).

Context

After the suppression of the January uprising in 1864, a significant group of Polish political and social thinkers, representing a wide ideological spectrum from conservatism to liberalism, formulated a new ideology of organic work, based on a vision of economical and social progress, and dismissing any attempt at “striving towards independence” (see **Józef Szujski**, *Several truths from our history*, and **Aleksander Świętochowski**, *Political directives*). Some representatives of the new generation who became more vocal during the 1890s strongly opposed this program. This was the generation of Artur Górski, which created the first socialist (1892), social-democratic, and nationalist (1893) parties. In politics, these new trends were represented by figures such as **Roman Dmowski**, **Józef Piłsudski**, Ignacy Daszyński, and Rosa Luxemburg. As far as literature was concerned, the major figure that determined the attack on positivist writers in the name of *l’art pour l’art* was Stanisław Przybyszewski, who was especially popular in Germany. In the Polish context, this slogan questioned not only the educational aims of positivist literature but also the national agendas of the time. At the turn of the century, Przybyszewski came to Cracow as a renowned ‘decadent.’ In the history of Polish literature, the moment of his arrival is usually seen as the beginning of a new epoch: namely that of ‘Young Poland.’ The representatives of the movement criticized positivism and searched for Polish predecessors in the Romantic literary canon, therefore they are often described as the Neo-Romantics.

Artur Górski actively participated in the emerging debates on the new role of literature. His text, although radical in its attacks on ‘old’ literature, was rather limited in its positive formulations. It constituted the beginning stage of a full-fledged literary program, and was interpreted as such both by its critics and followers. It is significant not only for Górski, but also for ‘Young Poland’ that the new formulation of the role of literature was to some extent self-contradictory. On the one hand, it appealed to an art (and especially to a literature) that was free of patriotic and political tasks, social or economic concerns, and was dismissive of the philosophical theories of positivism. On the other hand, it strongly stressed the national cult within Polish Romanticism, whose patriotic overtones cannot be overlooked. The ‘modernist’ agenda of Westernization and the modernization of national culture were issues that had been widely used by the previous ‘positivist’ generation, and they were thus unlikely to serve the purpose of a programmatic differentiation. In his text Górski referred mostly to the native literary tradition as a ref-

erence point for the new generation. Probably the most obvious difference between Górski and other thinkers of 'Young Poland,' such as Zenon 'Miriam' Przesmycki, Stanisław Brzozowski or Wacław Nałkowski, was his admiration of **Mickiewicz**, who was not all that popular among his peers. It should also be noted that Górski did not address the question of decadence and pessimism, features that became more and more characteristic for the new literary generation.

The impact of 'Young Poland' on literature and on the sense of cultural identity among the Poles was not extremely strong. Firstly, its area of impact was primarily Galicia, not the Russian or German parts of partitioned Poland. Autonomist Galicia was associated with Polish soulless bureaucracy, the conservative national and state elites, and a relatively strong middle class, which allowed space for aesthetic novelties. It, therefore, provided better conditions for Polish cultural life than the Russian and German parts of Poland. Polish literary life in Poznań (*Ger.* Posen) was—in comparison to Galician Cracow or Lwów (*Ukr.* Lviv, *Ger.* Lemberg)—very conservative and traditionally attached to the principles of social solidarism and 'organic' development. In the Congress Kingdom and in the western *gubernyas* (provinces) of Russia, censorship drastically limited the possibility of intellectual debates focusing on the Polish national and literary tradition.

In terms of its popular impact, 'Young Poland' could not compete with movements such as Romanticism or even positivism. As an epoch in the history of Polish literature, it lasted only until 1918. The independent Polish state had its own literary life, animated by other trends of literary Modernism. Moreover, the 'impassioned' language of modernist poems and novels gradually became the laughing stock of the new generations. Consequently, the main authors of 'Young Poland' were neglected and forgotten, becoming only occasional objects of 'rediscovery' in literary history.

MG

Young Poland

Programs should be created by people who are ready to act. We do not plan to do that by any means. In fact, when we undertake writing, it is precisely in order not to go into action. Literature is our Patroness, our Mediatix, and our Joy, to whom we, the sinful ones, call from the depths of our desires and sorrow. We bring out our thoughts and forms just as a tide brings out the fish, shells and the drowned...—you, on the other hand, should do like the fishermen: take all that you can eat and leave the inedible. And if you

come across a drowned man, do not mock his nudity as fools would, but take off your hats and pay respect to his misery. He drowned himself because he swam too far—a fate that you will never share, as you never leave the shore.

The peaceful ones! They never look behind the veil of current gossip, never direct their steps to where the lonely shadows of humanity's leaders wander. Their journalistic souls have never heard the wailing of the ominous winds that blow over Isaiah's head in the Sistine Chapel. Drunken bliss on their faces, pig-headedness and pride of their foolishness in their hearts. Let the morally impeccable pillars of society stand in peace, but do not let them tread with their dirty shoes on our thoughts as if they were their own, so that we do not have to shake their foundations... [...]

"Where are your heroic deeds?" That is the question we hear from the respectful and sympathetic people. [...] First and foremost, we need to be able to defend ourselves. But first, my reader, let me ask you a question: Have you ever howled with pain? As dogs do? Do you know what real suffering is? [...]

Do you know, by any chance, the feeling of revenge, that craves the blood of entire nations, and drags entire centuries before its tribunal, yet, in all its intensity, cannot even make a leaf fall off a tree? Do you know the feeling of doubt, swaying like a child over the church roof? Or the terror that arrests your heart, like a cutthroat's knife? And have you ever, when reading a book, covered your eyes in horror or slammed the book onto the floor? Was it not 'The History of Poland' that you were reading? ...

Unless you are like an ocean stirred by roaring storms, you shall not understand the young souls' unrest, you shall not comprehend why they rebel [...]. Unless you have never reached the other side of time, further than the third part of Mickiewicz's *Dziady*, further than the year 1863¹, unless you have, by the age of 25, suffered from all diseases of your time and of your nation, and unless your soul has been injured in the brutal daily trading of slogans like "the reason of the state" and "the logic of life," and all other tortures imposed today on the soul of a young Pole—then you and I are not likely to reach an agreement.

You ask where our "heroic deed" is, but what right do you have to pose such a question? And who are you to inquire about that? Are you not a representative of the society who delivered 'The Stańczyk Case'² and the theory of

¹ Górski refers to the January uprising (1863–1864).

² *Teka Stańczyka*: a political pamphlet ironically criticizing Polish Romantic irredentism. A group of Cracow conservatives (the *Stańczycy*) were named after this document. Stańczyk, a historical figure, was described as a 'wise clown' at the court

three-way loyalty? Are you not one of those who watched with an indifferent eye when our schools did not teach us patriotism?! Not even a sense of national identity? We learned history from the (translated) German textbooks, which exuded German spirit and a German worldview—the Polish history was treated *per non est*, and people were strictly prohibited from organizing demonstrations. Moreover, as soon as the repressed patriotic feeling found its outlet in secret organizations—which attracted even the young university students and which, despite losing their rigorously conspiratorial character, remained a useful school of character—our *Polish* prosecutors and our *Polish* courts dealt with the young patriots with a great eagerness, ordering searching and arrests, criminal sentences and exiles, and often destroying once and for all the careers of young Poles. As a consequence—and a terrible consequence it was—the sense of wrongdoing, which had been forcefully attached to these innocent acts, infected the minds of the young and the very feeling of patriotism, and proved fatal for the development of young characters.

When, having reached maturity in the course of national disasters, this youth followed enthusiastically the ideas of patriotism and independence, and turned to the Polish worker and peasant as the source of society's greatest force—how did you welcome these “hotheads,” how did you answer their “heroic deed,” their sacrifice, spirit and enthusiasm? How?

Was it at least with sharp but sympathetic criticism? Or perhaps with a constructive use of their efforts? Not at all! Your only response was the criminal courts, insults and persecution. [...]

As a result, the natural and vigorous patriotism gave way to a new kind of public attitude—a so-called patriotism built on such sensibility, culture and loyalty that can be paid by installments spread over an indefinite period of time. [...]

The country's government became the property of the “historically” privileged class of society, regardless of the fact that this appropriation was a “certain” violation of the constitution. To us, it makes no difference who stands at the helm of the nation, as long as they are good helmsmen; no longer do we believe in the gentry, and our confidence in the bourgeois is still too little. What matters to us are the effects of this rule on the cultural development of our citizens both individually and collectively, as a nation.

For now, however, it seems that our cultural activity, science and art, have been transformed into a kind of archaeological enterprise aimed at sustaining

of the king Sigismund I in the sixteenth century. *Teka Stańczyka* was first published in 1869 in *Przegląd Polski*.

their strictly national character; all our intellectual output, as long as it was not too specialistic, was put in conflict with the Western thought and line of development, and pushed towards long-gone ideas and beliefs. Although in the past these ideas were an inspiration for the soul, the source of energy and progress, today, with the decay of mediaeval ideologies, they no longer impact on our minds, and have mostly been verified. [...]

This tendency prevails nowadays because it relies on the support of public opinion, the press and the church; it is authorized by scholarship, and guarded by administrative posts—in fact, by all political “assets.” Yet, has it produced anything or anyone great, has it provided any Pole with powers enabling him to shine on the contemporary cultural scene? Sienkiewicz? Open your eyes and stop deluding yourself! We love and respect him, that is a fact, but the world’s literature will value more such authors as Przybyszewski.

This way of understanding “tradition” and “national spirit” begins to impoverish our souls from the very young age. [...] Just as the Greeks could not endlessly defeat the Persians, so we cannot live constantly in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, or fight the Battle of Grochów.³ Therefore, if in the contemporary literature you find unfamiliar motifs, or see an escapist approach towards reality [...] then [...] try to understand both us and yourselves. Once you do that, you should lower your heads and confess: “Our hearts are not innocent, they are plagued by lies, fierce disputes, hypocrisy and childish feudal Lvivian-Viennese politics. We lack grand ideas and great sacrifice—we are not worthy of the sublime heroic poetry! We are not worthy! ...” [...]

- How come? So many words and still no program? This question echoes on both sides; among those who challenge us, and among us who are supposed to respond, because a program is the main thing that counts in today’s society. [...]

This should be changed once and for all! In our view, it is talent not programs that deserves sheer and honest respect. It is talent that is our trump card in the struggle for existence, our *raison d’être*. For if some extraterrestrial force came down onto earth, proclaimed a judgment day for all nations and asked—like the Lord asks his servants—“What have you done with the talents I gave you?,” what would be the nations’ reply? The French would point to those among them who ennobled the human soul, and so would the Italians, the English, the Germans and other cultured nations. We would hear the names of Dante, Pascal, Shakespeare, Molière, Mozart, Beethoven and

³ The major confrontation of the November uprising (1830–1831).

many, many others. But what about us? Hearing the clamor in Galicia, we might think that instead of names of Copernicus, Chopin and Mickiewicz, our nation would rather mention political programs: the *Stańczyk*, the republican, the democratic and the socialist programs... And if, in such clamor, there managed to grow any talent, it would probably not be worth mentioning.

This is the result of the atmosphere in Polish spiritual life. The talented are demoralized, their authenticity is spoiled, their sincerity is enslaved; they are forced, if not to tell lies, then to remain silent about that which their hearts cry about, and compromise it in the name of the prose of life. [...] Do any of our best and widely respected artists guide today the march of contemporary thought, or at least find means of expressing the soul of a contemporary Pole? Not at all! They fraternize with public opinion, with the masses, and—as it seems—they fail to notice how behind they are in this procession, how slow is their march! As a result, our current literature is a literature of salons, a reading for women, which does not penetrate the core of existence or focus upon higher ideas—its axis is the trimmings of a woman's dress. [...]

If we are to propose any program, it shall include a demand for the young talents' sincerity, moral courage and even sacrifice in taking risks in the face of minor everyday worries. Our fathers possessed different kinds of courage; their sacrifices were different as well, but let their spirit of devotion prevail. After all it is one queen that we serve—Poland ...

If we use the word “young” in the title, it does not mean we give life to something new while abandoning all that has been achieved in the past. On the contrary, our greatest aim is to preserve the continuity of civilizational progress. We have been raised on our finest writers and poets—Słowacki, Krasiński, Sienkiewicz and, above all, Mickiewicz—and as their lucky heirs we take from the spiritual and literary treasure they left in their will; we hold to this foundation of our culture like trees hold to the ground in which they grow. And if we ever turn our attention to the West, we do it similarly to other nations, taking from their literature what is useful for us, and discarding like a broken toy all that is unassimilable and harmful. Therefore, what we demand from Polish literature is for it to be *Polish*, Polish to the bone—because if it loses its local character, it will also lose its strength and value, its *raison d'être*. Moreover, we urge it to be young, winged like an eagle, spirited by the divine force and Mickiewiczian passion. [...]

When our culture began to neglect its Slavic elements in favor of the Roman ones, Mickiewicz raised above everyday matters and put in writing the endless love for the Slavic soul that filled his heart. This most noble of all

Poles was also a man, a flesh-and-blood humanitarian—this is where originates the national character of his art. He elevated our poetry to such heights that it could compete with the Western lyrics, and filled it with such expressiveness, such emotional intensity as no other poet before. This passion and ardor are a uniquely Polish feature—we shall unmistakably find it also in Kościuszko and Matejko.⁴

The spirit of Mickiewicz is our guiding spirit, a thing divine and fresh but at the same time nostalgic. If we preserve it, nothing will go wrong, and we shall not lose our senses or suffer humiliation. This spirit is our key to national renaissance.

Translated by Zuzanna Ładyga

⁴ Jan Matejko (1838–1893): An important representative of Polish historical painting, author of *Battle of Grunwald*.

ENDRE ADY: I AM THE SON OF KING GOG OF MAGOG; SONG OF THE HUNGARIAN JACOBIN

Title: *Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én* (I am the son of king Gog of Magog); *Magyar jakobinus dala* (Song of the Hungarian Jacobin)

Originally published: *Góg és Magóg fia vagyok én* was published as the opening poem of the volume *Új versek* (New poems) (Budapest: Pallas, R.T., 1906). *Magyar jakobinus dala* was the first poem of the cycle *Téli Magyarország* (Winter Hungary) of the volume *Vér és arany* (Blood and gold), (Budapest, Franklin-társulat, 1908)

Language: Hungarian

The excerpts used are from *Ady Endre összes versei* (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1950), p. 7 and p. 114.

About the author

Endre Ady [1877, Érmindszent (Transylvania, *Rom.* Mecențiu, present-day Ady Endre, in Romania) – 1919, Budapest]: poet, critic, journalist, the key figure of Hungarian modernist literature. He was the descendant of an impoverished Calvinist gentry family. He attended the Piarist Gymnasium in Nagykároly (*Rom.* Carei, present-day Romania) between 1888 and 1892, and then the Calvinist College in Zilah (*Rom.* Zălau, present-day Romania) between 1892 and 1896. He then studied law in Debrecen and Budapest. He interrupted his university studies and became member of various editorial boards in Debrecen. His poems, short stories, and critiques appeared in local newspapers. In 1900, Ady accepted a job in the journal *Szabadság* (Liberty) in Nagyvárad (*Rom.* Oradea, *Ger.* Gross-Wardein, in present-day Romania) and decided, contrary to his family's wishes, to pursue a career as journalist and writer. Later, he joined the staff of the liberal journal *Nagyváradai Napló* (Nagyvárad diary). He became acquainted with a married woman, Adél Brüll, in the summer of 1903, and began a ten-year relationship with her. In January 1904, he traveled to France, spending nearly a year there and returning repeatedly over the following three years. Ady was deeply influenced by French culture. In 1908, he became a contributor to the leading modernist literary magazine, *Nyugat* (West). During these years he was also politically active, closely cooperating with the radical intellectuals who pressed for universal suffrage and social reforms. In 1915, he married Berta Boncza, daughter of a Transylvanian noble family from Csucsá (*Rom.* Ciucea, in present-day Romania). He moved to Budapest in 1917. After periods spent in hospital due to his syphilis, Ady fell fatally ill during the October Revolution in 1918 and died in *Park*

Sanatorium three months later. While his *oeuvre* has been interpreted in radically different ways by different cultural-political subcultures, he remains a central figure of modern Hungarian literary history.

Main works: *Új versek* [New poems] (1906); *Vér és arany* [Blood and gold] (1908); *Az Illés szekerén* [In Elijah's chariot] (1909); *Szeretném, ha szeretnének* [I want to be loved] (1910); *Vallomások és tanulmányok* [Confessions and studies] (1911); *A menekülő élet* [Fugitive life] (1912); *Margita élni akar* [Margita wishes to live] (1912); *A magunk szerelme* [Our self-love] (1913); *Ki látott engem?* [Who saw me?] (1914); *A halottak élén* [In front of the dead] (1918).

Context

The Hungarian gentry underwent a dramatic transformation after 1867. Traditionally identified with the 'Hungarian nation,' it had participated extensively in the reform movement of the 1840s and the revolution of 1848. After the Ausgleich of 1867, however, the position of this social stratum was challenged: its members had to endure the counter-effects of the very modernization process they had been promoting a generation before. Urbanization, bureaucratization and industrialization all contributed to the shift in the symbolic power-relationships, and, by the turn of the century, it was a commonplace that the gentry's way of life was in a deep crisis. Ady came from exactly such a milieu.

Politically this stratum was a fervent supporter of the 'Independentist' ideology, which gradually lost most of its liberal components and turned more and more nationalistic (with the notable exception of the veteran politician, **Lajos Mocsáry**). But there was an alternative potential inherent in the 'Independentist' discourse as well, envisioning a democratic reform as a means of undermining the Ausgleich, which was perceived to have been created by opportunist politicians disregarding the national interest and betraying the heritage of the 1848–49 revolution. The Achilles' heel of this ideological option was the nationality question, as any kind of further democratization would threaten the Hungarians, who made up barely one half of the population of the country, with the collapse of their multi-ethnic state. At the same time, new political groupings which challenged the political system of the country were emerging: on the one hand the social-democratic movement and, on the other, the urban intelligentsia and upper middle-class. These groupings felt completely excluded from traditional politics dominated by gentry and state-bureaucracy, and thus became increasingly radicalized.

Ady started his journalistic career as the supporter of the Independentist-nationalist camp. However, after his stay in Nagyvárad, which was a rapidly

modernizing town with a Westernized, predominantly Jewish bourgeoisie, and following his cathartic experience of modernity in Paris, he changed his allegiances both in aesthetic and in political terms. He met **Oszkár Jászi** and his radical circle, and sympathized with their efforts to reshape the Hungarian national discourse in order to create a common symbolic ground for the different social strata discontent with the ruling regime. The distinct poetic language Ady added to this was a peculiar fusion of the idiom of early modern Protestant political theology, characterized by motifs such as 'elect nationhood' (based on the parallel of the Hungarian nation with the Jews of the Old Testament), anti-Habsburg cultural discourse, and literary Modernism.

Ady's 1906 volume, entitled 'New Poems,' was a milestone in Hungarian literary history and has even been described as the starting point of Hungarian Modernism. The poem 'I am the son of king Gog of Magog' was a poetic *credo*, placed before the first cycle of poems in the volume. Its claim was that modernity and Hungarianness were not at all contradictory; what is more, authentic Hungarianness was compatible with the Western cultural canon. The poem created a powerful symbolic geography to support this claim. Ady asserted that, contrary to the opinions of the conservative-nationalist camp that cherished a petrified post-Romanticism, not only could his modernist poetry not be excluded from Hungarianness, but it represented its true spirit.

The second poem appeared two years later in the context of the sharpening political conflicts in the country. In Ady's view, the official political elite was completely doomed. This was proved by the 1905–1906 constitutional crisis, when Francis Joseph I was unwilling to nominate the leader of the Independence Party, the son of **Lajos Kossuth**, as Prime Minister, even though the opposition won the election. The political struggle led to a chauvinistic campaign orchestrated by the Independentists against the government imposed by Vienna, which in turn sought to strengthen its legitimacy by proposing universal suffrage and a number of social reforms aimed at the underprivileged classes and the nationalities. Going against the general opinion of the Hungarian political class, Ady supported these measures of the 'unconstitutional government,' which, however, quickly collapsed under the pressure of widespread unrest and institutional sabotage. When the Independence Party eventually came to power through a compromise, it could not implement its program of revising the dualist system and legislated a series of oppressive measures against the nationalities. All this destroyed any hopes of a potential fusion of the Independence Party with a democratic program.

Ady thus identified with the political platform of the civic radicals, who tried to integrate the different opposition movements, most significantly

those of the socialists and the nationalities, in demanding universal suffrage and the democratization of the country. This ideological stance also referred to the discourse of Marxist and radical intellectuals, such as Ervin Szabó (1877–1918), in which the social and political conditions of the country were defined as inherently feudal. The ‘Song of the Hungarian Jacobin’ is a symbolic formulation of this ‘offer of cooperation.’ It evokes the Hungarian Jacobin conspiracy (see **József Hajnóczy**, *Letter to Miklós Forgách*), an anti-Habsburg movement in the late-eighteenth century, in which the members of the Hungarian political and cultural elite were implicated in a program of radical democratic transformation. The message of the poem is that social and political emancipation can only be reached through a radical transformation, based on the cooperation of the Hungarian and non-Hungarian peoples against the “lords and rascals” of the post-feudal oligarchy.

Ady’s figure became a crucial icon of the radical opposition, and his aesthetics became a point of reference for an entire generation of poets, even though Ady personally was rather irritated by the cohort of modernists following in his footsteps. The 1918 Revolution, which brought together social democrats, civic radicals and the left-wing splinter group of the Independence Party under Count Mihály Károlyi’s coalition, took Ady as its symbol. This is why, in the 1920s, his figure was under heavy attack from the conservatives, who attempted to exclude him from the national canon because of his ‘decadence’ and left-wing political sympathies. It took a decade of violent cultural debates to reach some kind of minimal consensus, after which he became a common cultural reference, even though different ideological camps constructed their ‘own Ady’—ranging from the image of an ‘ethnic genius’ to that of the ‘progressive poet.’ He was, to a certain extent, also appropriated by the communist cultural politics of the 1950s. The communists disseminated only his ‘revolutionary’ poems, while playing down his religious poetry and eliminating the actual political and cultural context of his *oeuvre*. These connotations of his work were only re-addressed in the 1960s and 1970s, with the publication of the critical edition of his works and alongside the gradual rediscovery of the ‘civic radical’ political and cultural heritage.

BT

I am the son of King Gog of Magog¹

I am the son of King Gog of Magog,
I'm banging doors and walls to no avail –
yet I must ask this question as prologue:
may I weep in the grim Carpathian vale?

I came along Verecke's² famous path,
old Magyar tunes still tear into my chest –
will it arouse your Lordships' righteous wrath
as I burst in with new songs from the West?

Pour in my ears your molten liquid lead,
let me become the new Vazul³ of songs –
let me not hear the new songs you have bred:
Come, tread me down in furious, evil throngs!

But to the end, tortured, expecting nothing,
the song keeps soaring on its new-found wings:
even if cursed by a hundred Founding Fathers⁴ –
triumphant, new, Magyar, and true it rings.

Translated by Adam Makkai in Adam Makkai, ed. – *In Quest of the 'Miracle Stag': The Poetry of Hungary* (Chicago: Atlantis-Centaur, 1996), p. 400.

¹ *Góg és Magóg fia*. The translation rectified Ady's formulation and returned to the Biblical version: Gog, King of Magog. Originally a Biblical reference to peoples in the North, who were the descendants of Japheth; they gained an apocalyptic connotation in the prophecies of Ezekiel (Ezekiel: 38). In the medieval 'Alexander legend', they were transformed into giants, living somewhere around the Caucasus, locked in a chasm by a metal gate—in Ady these connotations are fused with the reference to the Hungarian ethnogenetic mythology, deriving the Hungarians from the daughters of the Caucasian king Menrot, who was sometimes identified with the Biblical king Nimrod.

² Verecke (*Ukr.* Veretsky Pereval): The north-eastern passage where the Hungarians entered the Carpathian Basin.

³ Vazul: Relative of King Stephen. He was allegedly implicated in a conspiracy against the King and as a punishment molten lead was poured into his ears.

⁴ In the original version: Pusztašzer. The legendary place of the final act of the Hungarian tribes' occupation of the Carpathian Basin; after the battle, Árpád and the chiefs of the other tribes made a symbolic gesture of appropriating the land. In 1896, a representative monument of the Millennium festivities was built there. For Ady, obviously it was the symbol of official nationalism.

Song of a Hungarian Jacobin

Blood from our fingertips comes welling
 when, oh poor, sleepy Hungary,
 we touch you with them and we wonder:
 do you exist at all? Do we?
 do you exist at all? Do we?

How hopes the future to be better?
 With anguish in our souls and eyes
 we question if the slaves of Babel
 will from their slumber ever rise.

Will from a thousand sluggish longings
 be born at last one mighty will?

This age-old torment is the portion
 Of Vlachs and Slavs and Magyars still.

In anguish and humiliation
 a thousand years have made us one:
 on the soul's barricade in fury
 why can't we roar in unison?

Single the voice of Olt and Danube,
 a muffled murmur from the tomb.

To him, who is not lord or scoundrel,
 woe will befall in Árpád's home!⁵

When will we join at last together?
 When will our voices speak out loud?
 Magyar or not—it does not matter—
 we are the crushed, oppressed, and cowed.

How long must we be ruled by blackguards,
 poor, chicken-hearted millions, we?

How long must the Hungarian people
 like caged and captive starlings be?

Hungary's miserable beggars
 We've neither bread nor faith for fare;
 but all will come to us tomorrow
 if we but wish, if we but dare!

Translated by Sir Maurice Bowra, in: Adam Makkai, ed. – *In Quest of the 'Miracle Stag': The Poetry of Hungary* (Chicago: Atlantis-Centaur, 1996), pp. 413–414.

⁵ Originally “the country of Árpád” (Árpád hazája). This is an ambivalent reference to Hungary, supposedly the land of the Hungarians as a nation, but actually appropriated by the “lords and rascals.”

DIMO KYORCHEV: OUR SORROWS

Title: *Тъгите ни* (Our sorrows)¹

Originally published: *Алманах Южни цветове*, 1907, pp. 62–111.

Language: Bulgarian

The excerpts used are from the anthology: Stoyan Iliev ed., *Блуждаеща естетика. Българските символисти за символизма*, (Sofia: Издателство на БАН, 1992), pp. 158–161.

About the author

Dimo Kyorchev [1884, Veliko Tarnovo – 1928, Paris]: philosopher, essayist and politician. His father Petar Kyorchev was a teacher and former collaborator of Vasil Levski, the leader of the movement for national liberation. He graduated from high school in his hometown and, in 1905, left for Leipzig, where he started his studies in law. In 1908, he graduated from the faculty of law at the University of Sofia. Subsequently, he worked as a public prosecutor in Svishtov and as a lawyer in Sofia. Later, Kyorchev embarked upon a political career. He was among the active members of the National-Liberal Party, reaching the rank of political secretary in 1920. He acted as a deputy of the party between 1914–1919 and 1923–1928. His political model was Stefan Stambolov, the founding figure of modern Bulgarian politics. Kyorchev's views were formed under the decisive influence of Nietzsche's philosophy. He considered himself an ideologue of Bulgarian 'individualism.' In 1907, he edited, together with Trifon Kunev, the *Алманах Южни цветове* (Southern flowers), one of the early agents for the spread of Bulgarian modernism, in which his important essay 'Our Sorrows' was published. In 1909, together with Elin Pelin, he started publishing another influential journal, *Слънцоглед* (Sunflower). He also contributed to the journals *Наши живот* (Our life), *Ново време* (New time) and *Ден* (Day), and wrote political essays for the newspaper *Независимост* (Independence). Kyorchev could be qualified as one of the most enigmatic, misunderstood and underestimated figures of Bulgarian modernism. His work never occupied a central place in the literary canon. At the same time, on a thematic and discursive level, he could be seen as a crucial predecessor to the anti-modernist mystical turn of the late 1920s and 1930s. Kyorchev's selected works were published by **Janko Janev**, who was also the author of the only book dedicated to Kyorchev's work and personality, in 1932.

¹ The plural form of the word *тъга* (sorrow) is unusual in Bulgarian.

Main works: *Индивидуализъм в нашата литература* [Individualism in Our Literature] (1904), *Тъгите ни* [Our Sorrows] (1907), *Избрани произведения* [Selected works] (1933).

Context

The first generation of Bulgarian modernists were gathered in the circle named *Мисъл* [Thought], dominated by the literary critic and theoretician Krastyu Krastev (1866–1919). The circle also included Pencho Slaveykov (1866–1912), Peyo Javorov (1878–1914) and Petko Todorov (1879–1916). Krastev and the group *Мисъл* were the leading critics of the mainstream ‘National Romantic’ tradition, which was institutionalized in the late 1890s by **Ivan Vazov**, and characterized by its national and, according to its critics, anti-universal standpoint. According to Slaveykov’s critique, Vazov’s national literary project lacked any metaphysical grounds. Without a proper epic tradition, in which the metaphysical foundation of the nation would be generated, this nation could not fulfill its historical destiny. Thus, with his poem *Кървава песен* (Bloody song), Slaveykov took upon himself the task of creating the modern epic of the Bulgarians. Like Vazov before him, Slaveykov focused on the April uprising of 1876, already considered by Vazov as the formative moment of the Bulgarian nation. Slaveykov’s literary attempt did not have a significant effect. As a result of his disenchantment with the Bulgarian cultural context, Slaveykov left Bulgaria for Italy, and died there in 1912. His last book was the mystified anthology ‘On the island of the blessed.’ On the one hand, the ‘Island’ promoted an allegorical image of Bulgarian literature, but, on the other hand, it championed Slaveykov’s vision of literature being generated by individuals contributing to the building of an organic culture. In the end, the mystified anthology created the vision of a transcendental, a-historical homeland.

In a way, Kyorchev could be considered a mediator between, on the one hand, the group *Мисъл* and Pencho Slaveykov’s personal version of Nietzscheanism, and, on the other, the most important group of second-generation Bulgarian modernists, the symbolist *Hyperion*. This group was led by the poet Teodor Trayanov (1882–1945), the main rival of the mythologized member of *Мисъл*, Peyo Javorov, and the literary critic Ivan Radoslavov, who deified Trayanov, and even Kyorchev after the latter’s premature death.

In ‘Our Sorrows,’ Kyorchev not only proclaims the principles of symbolism, but also elaborates on a theory of the a-topical, a-national mystical Motherland. With transcendentalist pathos, striving for the realm of the sa-

cred, this modernist manifesto also reveals some anti-modernist inclinations, in particular the religious pathos aimed at manifesting the transcendental essence of the Motherland. In this sense, 'Our Sorrows' is symptomatic of the initially ambivalent position of aesthetic modernism. In the leitmotif of Kyorchev's text, one might identify the Romantic theme of the Homeland, developed by Hegel, as the Homeland of the Spirit. This philosophical idea constitutes the 'ontological' ground of nationalism and allows the paradoxical move from individualism to universalism. Thus, Kyorchev's 'sorrows' for the lost transcendent homeland set the discursive ground for the elaboration of a project of national ontology. 'Our Sorrows' became, in fact, a manifesto of late Bulgarian modernism, especially after its mystical and nationalist turn following the national catastrophes in the subsequent Balkan and First World Wars. This was the main project of the late modernism of the *Hyperion* circle, and of authors like **Nayden Sheytanov** and **Janko Janev**, whose 'aesthetization of politics' (according to Walter Benjamin's designation of 'fascist' rhetoric) relied on that radical ontological turn. Supporting such a thesis are the later visions of the group *Hyperion* about a transcendental, a-historical and messianic national community, as well as the very fact that the first volume of Kyorchev's selected works was published by the most radical anti-modernist thinker of the 1930s, Janko Janev.

BM

Our sorrows

Art as a means of self-improvement has three ingredients: God, silence and homeland. The word "self-improvement" sounds wrong. Any ordinary reader would think we are setting goals for art. Self-improvement is not a goal we may set ourselves, but a road to those intuitive impulses that guide us through the disunion of the world to the union of God. Art doesn't solve any problems, it doesn't serve any goals. It is a gift from God and therefore it may live and grow through the doors of cognition. God is everywhere at all times, and art as His pure manifestation is beyond time and place, not serving any needs, not pursuing any goals. Various artistic schools in the past bore different names; many wanted to utilize it by setting it certain tasks. Yet every task and goal originates and grows in a causal manner; they were born by circumstance and they represent new forms of experience. How do we distinguish the living man from his corpse? Both have the same amount of matter, but its goals and tasks are different; the circulation of blood stops and decomposition starts—i.e. forms change according to the circumstances of

experience. This mutability of things does not give us an idea of their essence and persistence; on the contrary, by force of habit we see a new thing in every new form. Yet if all those novelties are but appearances, whose variety and mutability conceal eternity and primordial unity, we reach God unwittingly, and our further intuition reveals His wonders and eternal life. Art, as the offspring of that intuition, cannot be divided into schools and systems; it springs from what's eternal and immutable; it seeks the idea of things through their appearance. The new artist, by using all old schools, created the will to unify the manifestations of the soul in art, in philosophy, in science, in everything that ever was the province of the human soul. He will be the first to teach us to forget about names and signs, about transient beauty and masked grace, shed every burden on our way to eternity. His new call invokes the deeply symbolic words of Christ: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. To hell with all those schools and cliques, death claims them every day.

The second element of new art is silence or conversation with God. The synthesis of all culture created and remembered by history leads to the unity of the soul, which fills our solitude with the voice of the human heart. Man is always alone. This is one of his tragedies. He is not alone when he is silent. Silence is not the peace of the tired or the muteness of the lost traveler but rather the mature physical life when the soul is awakened and refreshed. Silence is a mark of infinity and an enemy of our transient life; in love, our earliest death, we are silent when we leave the world to enter nirvana. Silence is the enemy of form because it destroys what is transient in us and it is the enemy of schools as well. It takes the soul to the furthest recesses of the universe, making us forget the pains of yesterday. Silence is the best doctor, as death is the bravest savior. Born crying, we build all our life in pain and suffering. We could break free if we could learn silence; the pessimist is most often *heiter*² [serene] because he heals himself with silence. The irrationality of the universe lies in silence and the silent way it moves into infinity. Therefore our immortality lies in silence.

Art, glutted with changes, seeks its constancy in the integrity of the soul—in its peace and silence, in the plots it weaves with death and our passion, states when we are at our most serene. Love, death and God are elusive; the serene steppes of silence are their abode, and the pathways there is the suffering of the soul; its throes taught us to pray, and the prayers brought the silence God lives in.

² In German in the original.

Indelible, God and silence bring us the homeland, the first and only chance for life. All three conditions can be called by one name: beauty of the soul.

We come into the world crying and we go in pain—we are afraid of death, yet we are not afraid of life; as if we unwittingly love it for the misery it brings us. The cry of the newborn child is the first unconscious sigh anticipating his future suffering and the first sorrows for his homeland. Without anyone's commission it leaves God to live in hardship and misfortune until it joins Him once again; the bright moments in life, when pain fades and silence fills the soul with bliss, are those moments when he feels he's reached his homeland, yet those moments are few and quick to pass. They shortly give way to more cries. There are only tears and suffering in this world. The more we cry and the deeper our sorrow for our eternal homeland, the greater we are ourselves. We never have enough of pain and tears, because we have to search for our homeland, and there is no other way to reach it. And the future culture will be as great as the spiritual life that it brings will be restless. Then we will think of self-improvement, as today we think of physical self-preservation.

The homeland is the truth humanity is aspiring to. Everybody reaches it through himself, therefore it sounds different for everyone. But its value lies not in the disparity of form but in the deepness of feeling.

Truth is an emotion of the irrational kind. Nietzsche called it a condition of life, Jesus called it immortality, and Indian books call it nirvana. We will consider it a condition of life to make clearer the thesis of the homeland as the third ingredient of modern art.

It is erroneously thought that the high priests of innovation are a few autonomous individuals who transcended their nationality to address everybody. In fact their modernity lies in turning their gaze to the homeland and the truths that anyone anywhere can feel and comprehend. Everybody should feel through his empirical conventions the non-empirical essence of things like homeland and truth. The different nationalities reach this essence in different ways and at different times; no country is denied the chance to find it as long as it feels life in the physical circumstance best assisting its development.

The homeland is everywhere: bright stars and cloud-obscured firmament; green woods and rocky wilderness, your friend and the eyes of his dog, the rose in the garden and the spider in the corner of your room—everything contains a piece of eternity and death; only the genius sees God everywhere, and the artist discovers His greatness. In our small land, where we are born and we die, life is not mechanized; nobody can say when it started, nobody

knows when it will end; before me came another, before people there came other forms of life, before life there were the wishes of God. Eternity here is as great and small as anywhere else. We have to look down its chasms to see the homeland; the artist has no other task. The feeling of alienation must stop, silence must come, and with it love.

To this day here we have not a single cloister, not a single temple. Nobody seeks his homeland and everybody lives on; everybody buys and sells, nurses desires, keeps accounts, expects favors and drives a quill, all are sinners and liars. Is it not a lie to consider yourself an artist when you have never said a prayer; is it not a great deception to think you believe in yourself, that you feel who you are, without knowing who begot you and to whom you owe your very soul, without feeling that this earth as part of eternity is also a part of God! What sin against infinity and love did you commit, you former Bulgarian writers, when you used the little consciousness you were given to set *goals* and create literature ... Your only consolation is that you had to be sinners, you had to be dung and soil. You produce literature when we need prayers and hymns *worded in our native tongue*.

In this land to our day there are wrongs. There is no good, because everything disturbs silence, love is lacking, because nobody consciously feels his homeland and God is slandered and abused. His abusers were not the church and not the street politicians, but you, the Bulgarian scribbling tribe, you who neglected the soul to serve goals, you, all writers, lyricists, playwrights, publicists and critics. Your time has come to creep like moribund beasts into the deepest wilderness of this poor country, and may your poisonous bones stay there forever.

We are seeking the homeland, the primordial father, to whom Jesus cried from the cross: Father, into your hands I commit my spirit; we grieve for that homeland day and night, when we hear the heavens roar and when the stars are wise and silent—anytime and anywhere. Therefore our sorrows are in chaos and disarray; but understanding with your soul means removing any framework, every ornament and systematization. It is only the plain streamlining soul that seeks order; it is only the simple spirit, blind for the eternity in every genius that seeks system and classification.

Our sorrows are the road to nirvana and to feeling the lightness of absolute liberation and absolute truth.

Translated by Zornitsa Dimova-Hristova

ANTUN GUSTAV MATOŠ: ART AND NATIONALISM

Title: *Umjetnost i nacionalizam* (Art and nationalism)

Originally published: Zagreb, *Obzor*, 28 January 1912

Language: Croatian

The excerpt used is from Dragutin Tadijanović, ed., *Antun Gustav Matoš III: Kritike, eseji, studije i članci, polemike, putopisi, feljtoni i impresije* (Zagreb: Zora – Matica Hrvatska, 1967), pp. 117–122.

About the author

Antun Gustav Matoš [1873, Tovarnik (near Vukovar, east Croatia) – 1914, Zagreb]: writer and journalist. After graduating from the gymnasium in Zagreb, he attended the Military Veterinary Academy in Vienna in 1893. In 1894 he defected from the Austro-Hungarian army and fled to Belgrade. Between 1894 and 1898, Matoš lived in Belgrade as a freelance journalist, and later, left for Paris, where he would spend five years living a bohemian life. He was heavily influenced by Paul Verlaine, Charles Baudelaire and Stendhal. Besides, Maurice Barrès's doctrine of nationalism had a formative impact on his work. Between 1904 and 1908, he lived again in Belgrade, where he became known as an outstanding writer and essayist, an outspoken critic of realism and naturalism in art and the Yugoslav idea in politics. After the Austro-Hungarian government granted an amnesty in 1908, Matoš went back to Zagreb. He was cherished as one of the leading Croatian artists and as one of the most outstanding 'opinion makers' of the time. In 1914, he died of lung cancer. In the Croatian national canon, Matoš is labeled as the most outstanding modern Croatian writer after **Miroslav Krleža**. He is regarded as the founder of full-fledged artistic modernism, and especially of modern Croatian literary criticism, as well as being a pioneer of essay and travel writing. In the 1990s, he was highly praised as the founding figure of turn-of-the-century Croatian liberal nationalism, since he argued for Croatian independence and against the idea of South Slav unity, simultaneously recognizing the Serbs and other national minorities in Croatia as self-standing political subjects.

Main works: *Iverje* [Fragments] (1899); *Novo iverje* [New fragments] (1900); *Ogledi* [Essays] (1905); *Vidici i putovi* [Horizons and roads] (1907); *Umorne priče* [Tired tales] (1909); *Naši ljudi i krajevi* [Our people and lands] (1910); *Sabrana djela* [Collected works] (1935–1940, 1973).

Context

Turn-of-the-century Croatia experienced tightly intertwined political and cultural transformations. These were launched by the so called *Napredna Omladina* (Progressive youth), the group of students who left Zagreb to continue their studies in Prague after the anti-Hungarian riots in 1895. Inspired by **Tomáš Masaryk**'s political thought, the 'Youth' shifted from the exclusivist political Croatism advocated by the *Stranka prava* (Party of Rights) back to the idea of Croat–Serb national oneness, becoming thus the *spiritus movens* of the foundation of the *Hrvatsko-Srpska koalicija* (Croat–Serb coalition), the political coalition which dominated Croatian politics up until the South Slav unification of 1918 (see **Franjo Supilo**, *The memorandum to sir Edward Grey*). The 'Youth' contested the late romanticist canon dominant in contemporary Croatian literature, which glorified the Croatian medieval state right tradition. Initially, the 'Youth' had launched an appeal for the autonomy of art. However, inspired by Hippolyte Taine's positivist definition of literature as a mirror of specific socio-political contexts, they soon began to propagate the social-nationalist canon. The 'Youth' envisioned literature as the mirror of national life, namely the living conditions of the people, and of the views of the so called 'national intellectuals.' For them, literature was an instrument for spreading the democratic national idea. However, by the late 1800s, when the Croat–Serb coalition advocating the South Slav political project entered a coalition alliance with the Budapest government, their political and literary ideas were contested by the *Mladohrvati* (Young Croats), the group of young intellectuals gathered around Antun Gustav Matoš. Politically, the 'Young Croats' followed the original *Stranka prava* idea of the Croatian political nation (see **Franjo Rački**, *Yugoslavism*). At the same time, however, they recognized the political subjectivity of Croatian Serbs, thus distancing themselves from the exclusivist ethnic and Catholic idea of Croatism advocated by the contemporaneous mainstream faction of *Stranka prava*, the so called *Čista stranka prava* (Pure Party of Rights).

Under Matoš's influence, the 'Young Croats' explicitly separated politics from literature, embracing simultaneously the principle of aesthetic autonomy, and understanding art as the expression of the extraordinary, talented individual. However, Matoš's followers in the early 1910s, such as Tin Ujević, Ivo Andrić and **Miroslav Krleža**, abandoned him both artistically and politically. Artistically, they became inclined towards the rising avant-garde trends, especially futurism, all of which Matoš refused due to their presumed anti-aestheticism and disdain for national history and tradition. Politi-

cally, at the climax of the popularity of the idea of South Slav unity on the eve of the First World War, the next generation of 'Young Croats' adopted the idea of the integral Yugoslav nation, subsequently becoming the leaders of the *Nacionalistička omladina*, the successor group of the 'Progressive Youth' (see **August Cesarec**, *The national question and our missions*). The 'Nationalistic Youth' developed the idea of an integral Yugoslav nation, subsequently supplementing it with the cultural idea of the Yugoslav heroic character. Heroism was allegedly embodied in the Serbian warrior character, and was to be imposed on the Croats and Slovenes with the aim to replace their legalist statehood ideas. These ideas were seen not only as the obsolete feudal obstacles to south Slav unification, but also as the results of "degenerative" foreign (primarily Austrian and Hungarian) influences on Croat and Slovene "national mentalities."

Matoš's entire life and work, especially his Zagreb years (1907–1914), were mostly characterized by a constant polemic with his political and artistic opponents from the 'Progressive Youth' generation, and especially with its two leaders, Milan Marjanović and his Serbian counterpart **Jovan Skerlić**. Although the political dispute between Yugoslavism and Croatism constituted the background, the polemic was based primarily on different views of the national significance of art, although all three figures were influenced by social-Darwinist theories about an ongoing contest for the survival of unique national cultures. Hence, although Marjanović and Skerlić advocated a rationalistic understanding of art, they both stressed the notion of a South Slav folk culture, considered as the only authentic expression of South Slav mentality, and hence perceived to be the only true source of artistic inspiration. In particular, Skerlić denounced aestheticism, which he perceived as an expression of decadent individualism. He advocated instead the social and national function of literature, as well as the role of the artist as the leader of national awakening. Folk culture was perceived by the 'Progressive Youth' to be at the root of national mentality, as it was uncorrupted, in their view, by German and Magyar influence. Skerlić, therefore, pleaded for a popular literature which would tap into folk culture and, at the same time, shape it according to the dictates of the national spirit.

The article 'Art and nationalism' presented here summarizes the arguments which Matoš used to contest the views of Skerlić and Marjanović. It was written when the claims for the pro-Yugoslav role of art reached its peak due to Serbia's political agitation on the eve of the First Balkan War (1912). Matoš believed that his opponents' claims about art neglected its aesthetic essence. He, instead, saw the national role of literature in the expression of

the autonomous aesthetic sensibilities of the individual. This view is informed by Maurice Barrès's conception of national character as the cumulative achievement of talented individuals grounded in tradition. Matoš refused both the notion of "autonomous folk spirit," as well as the ethnic idea of the nation. Hence, he rejected the concept of Croat-Serb national oneness, grounded in the idea of the linguistic and ethnic sameness of the South Slavs. Inspired by the original *Stranka Prava* idea of the Croatian political nation, Matoš located national identity in its historical-political traditions, which, he argued, constituted the basis of national mentality. As he regarded traditions to be to some extent the result of foreign influences on national life, Matoš advocated Croatian receptiveness towards the influences of foreign cultures. He claimed that the artist should always adapt foreign influences to the mentality of the nation, thus elevating national culture, even if the people were unwilling to accept these appropriated ideas. The only case where Matoš made an exception was the German one, since he was afraid that the ongoing process of Germanization would finally destroy the Croatian national mentality. In fact, Matoš's discourse testifies to the ambivalence of aesthetic modernism, which was also witnessed by the 'rationalist positivism' of Skerlić and Marjanović. Under the influence of Barrès's earlier writings, Matoš contested the mediocrity and anti-religious materialism of bourgeois society, whose incarnation in Croatia he had found in the political circles of the 'Progressive Youth.' Instead, he emphasized the idea of the Croatian soil and the notion of aristocratic personality, embodied in the historical tradition of Croatian nobility. However, Matoš did not follow Barrès's later shift toward the anti-democratic organic perception of society and toward imperialism, remaining a strenuous advocate of democracy, which he perceived as having been corrupted by the oligarchic ruling classes.

During socialist Yugoslavia, 'Art and nationalism' was interpreted as an appeal for the autonomy of art and literature. However, in the 1990s, the text was reframed in the overall interpretation of Matoš as the apogee of Croatian liberal nationalism, opposed to the prevailing Yugoslav idea. Hence, the text was read as the expression of the liberal-democratic conception of the role of literature in the nation-building process.

Art and nationalism

Discussing recently nationality and art in the journal *Savremenik*, Dr. B. Wiesner Livadić¹ complained about exaggerated nationalist tendencies in our art criticism and—as is usually the case—he is and is not right. Our criticism really is too nationalistic when it evaluates works of art through a purely or even a party nationalistic-oriented lens (which seems to be true in most cases), and is not nationalistic enough because in its analysis of art for people's sake, it does not question whether the artist is in accordance with the soul and style of the people. This is because an artifact is only an expression, a symbol of specific features of a complicated and mysterious but uniform and individual psyche of the people. Notwithstanding Mr. Wiesner Livadić's standpoint, Hamlet is an Englishman as are Shakespeare's other protagonists: an Englishman by virtue of his spleen, his humor, his Puritanism and his canto. All real art is national simply because international art cannot exist since there is no international artistic expression: an expression that would be understandable to the same degree to all nations around the world and that would not have a national genesis.

Not all forms of art are national in the same way. Literature and poetry are the most national forms because they are connected to national languages. Music, architecture and plastic arts are not so much determined by expression, but are, as literature, an expression of a special national character and soul. It is true that some styles of architecture (Classical, Romanesque, Gothic) have become international, but they originated as national. Nationalism and internationalism are not contradictory terms in art as they are not always contradictory in politics.

Since each great work of art which is primarily a national product can always become an international commodity, artistic nationalism (unlike political nationalism) does not imply negation of foreign values. On the contrary, it is exactly the richness and diversity of various national cultures which represent a precondition for a major symphony of the comprehensive international development. Today, Europe is more cultured than in the era when it had to have just one language and one style. Since each nation represents a string of the national lyre of humanity, each representative of the specific national soul is, accordingly, also a representative of humanity. Molière, Dante, Goethe, major

¹ Branimir Wiesner-Livadić (1871–1949): Croatian literary critic and theoretician. One of the most prominent members of Croatian literary modernism in the 1880s and 1890s. He advocated the autonomy of art and cosmopolitanism, against tendencies that favored the instrumentalization of art for national purposes.

poets and artist are bearers of the genius of their race. Only as such could these crystallized national souls have become lighthouses of humanity.

This national moment in art was established long ago, and Taine has tried to systematize it in his theory, according to which an artist and a work of art are the result of race, milieu and moment, in other words, primarily national circumstances. Leaving aside to what extent this method is correct for analyzing an artist as a member of a society and insufficient for establishing all that is individual, special, distinctive and unique in an artist, there is no doubt that a work of art can be national even if it is not a result of national influences. A work of art is not the simple result of the social action of an artist, but an expression of his reaction.

An artist is not merely a consequence but is, at the same time, the cause of social influences. Accordingly, the greater the artist, the greater the discrepancy among these influences. Hence, we could say that a great artist is the one who has influenced people more than people have influenced him. Consequently, a national artist can be a representative of national opinion and feeling, but can also be a reaction against such ideals and tastes of the people. Moreover, he will remain national because he is that nation for the simple reason that he is a member of that nation. Edgar Poe was against all American values of his age. He was a visionary in contrast to utilitarianism, an idealist in contrast to positivism, and an aristocrat in contrast to American democracy. He died without being understood by anybody, but he has still become the most national American writer with pure American values such as originality, the desire to bluff, a sense of the unseen, a bizarre, utmost individualism, and a sense for technical and scientific development. Popularity does not equal nationality. Goethe was not popular. The nation is an artist only via its individuals, frequently unknown and unacknowledged. The nation as a collective is a barbarian. Folk songs have not been made by a nation but by an unknown individual and the value of a nation is measured in the extent to which production of better individual values is higher. There are souls that contain the national soul of the whole nation, yet there are nations without a national soul.

The Croatian nation has had such periods among its unintelligent intelligentsia. An artist can be more national than the nation itself because he is the expression of the emphasized features of the national temperament.

Hence, every art is national and demanding art to be national equals demanding ice to be cold or fire to be hot.

Since every nationalism is a form of fight, art also participates in that fight either directly or indirectly. Art is also a form of dominance, conquest, inter-

national cultural conflict, it is an expression of vitality and living national ability, and a form of resistance of the national soul, but only as long as it remains pure art, as long as it is not biased by serving inartistic purposes. Shakespeare has conquered Europe. He has done more for spreading the English language than all the English admirals and politicians put together. He has been the most important vehicle for spreading English nationalism not because he is the greatest English nationalist, but because he is the first playwright of modern humanity. The Italian plastic Renaissance has not conquered the world because it is nationalistic, but because it has become the model for humanist beauty as the most refined form of the Italian soul.

French literature could not have conquered Europe before and after Napoleon if it had only spread the ideal of French nationalism. Its major impact occurred exactly at the time of the French classicist authors and the Encyclopaedists, in the era of Racine and Diderot, when there was practically no nationalist thread in French writing. Among the German writers who have contributed most to the spreading of the German spirit and thought, and accordingly to the indirect spread of German nationalism, are exactly those souls who have challenged German nationalism: writers such as Goethe, Heine, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. In other words, every major art is patriotic, but a major artist need not be a patriot.

Recently nationalism has been replaced by patriotism, so since every great art is supposed to be nationalistic, now it is demanded that all art should be patriotic. This does not only mean demanding from art, which primarily represents a free expression of beauty, to be biased and inartistic, but it also means limiting the emotional means of artistic expression. This is as if Liszt or Paganini were not allowed to use more than one musical scale. The artist successfully presents life and humanity in its totality and affects the whole being of the man because he refers to the total human sensibility and the totality of the soul in which patriotic impulse is just a single note, a single string. Accordingly, art that is only patriotic only fulfills a small, minimal need of our emotional life. Poets who are only patriotic are minor poets, but, in this respect, we should not confuse poets of freedom with patriotic ones, because the homeland and nation can be the very negation of true freedom without which there is no art. The whole England rose against Byron, and Heine is not highly regarded by a huge number of Germans.

Recently there have been nationalist, patriotic doctrines that, ostensibly in the interest of the pure national style, are against all non-national artistic influences, as if there were such thing as pure national art and a racially pure and unique nation. The basic motifs of folk poetry are the same all over the

world. There is no such thing as authentic folk poetry as there is no such thing as authentic aesthetic poetry. Hence, to preserve folk tradition means to remain under external and extra-national influences which contributed to the very creation of the tradition. Basic emotions such as fear, love, religious ecstasy, courage, etc., as well as aesthetic needs are the same among all peoples, which means that the content of art is mostly the same and what changes is its form, its expression to determine a specific national soul. Hence, it is completely irrelevant whether the content of art is developed under national or extra-national influences. All Indo-European and Arian tribes share the same mythos in their folk tales. Shakespeare used plots from all literatures and *Hamlet* was written under the influence of Montaigne's philosophy; Corneille was a pupil of the Spaniards, Racine was influenced by Euripides, the French classicist authors were pupils of classical antiquity, the romanticists were under the influence of German and English literature, and yet nobody will dispute the purely national features of the poetry of La Fontaine and Musset. The Russian novel developed under the influence of non-Russian literary movements, but still bears a measure of Russian nationalism because each non-national term can be transformed with a retort of a strong national artistic temperament into a new national artistic value, a new expression.

The strongest and the most vital are those artistic cultures that are—as is the case of Goethe—available to a growing number of influences, giving them forms of specific national expression because the content is subordinated to the form since the latter represents just a new modification of the former. Accordingly, imitation, a mere appropriation of foreign artistic models, is superfluous because it represents repetition and not analysis, a formality and not experience, a mere copy and not creation—as is the case with many of our ancient Dalmatian books. Our art will become national when it becomes European, i.e. when it will reflect authentic Croatian expression, a special national form of the spirit filled with European contents. Only the weak spirits—as a weak economy—are afraid of foreign competition, which is why they use protectionist methods of exclusive nationalism.

There are strong artistic temperaments which use powerful patriotic feelings to evaluate domestic and undermine foreign art. Dostoevsky admired only that which was Russian. During his travels, he belittled Paris, Italy and Germany in comparison to Russia. Gogol, too, turned into a chauvinist of a similar kind, but it was exactly these two authors that depicted Russia as hell. The same kind of exclusive nationalism has recently appeared in the most cultured of nations, but only as a consequence of antinational and even in-

artistic imported doctrines. Kipling is an imperialist as is the former socialist D'Annunzio.

Barrès and Maurras in France fight against collective, antinationalist tendencies and German cultural influence because this German influence on a higher French culture and art can only seem inferior, hence destructive. Major national cultures such as the French and English ones can be exclusively national; they can build the Great Wall of China around themselves because they are the leading cultures of the world. However, they are still influenced by foreign cultures: Shaw by German and Russian culture, Rodin by Italian, while Beethoven's music is all over Paris.

If this is the case with major cultures, how can it be different with smaller nations such as ours since we cannot even imagine artistic national exclusiveness?

Hence, our art shall become national in the proper sense of the word only when it becomes great, when it is written in a great and pure Croatian style. Our folk tunes have not been processed artistically and have not found their Chopin.

Our painters are already studying the Croatian landscape, and our sculpture has found a new expression for historic heroism in Meštrović² and new forms for our field work and our contemporary energy in Frangeš³. In literature, there is a growing awareness of the purity of the Croatian language and style. Our nation is among the first in Europe according to its artistic talent, mostly in poetry, music and the plastic arts, but we are hardly making ends meet in art because our own language and national life is in danger. These terrible conditions affect every Croat and, accordingly, every artist, the defender of the honor and destiny of his homeland because free national art can emerge only in a free homeland. It is the very need to establish free Croatian art that compels the artist to become first and foremost patriotic, and if our criticism warns our artists to fulfill this duty above all other duties, it does not breach the principles of free art, but does just the opposite: it defends them.

Translated by Iva Polak

² Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962): the most outstanding Croatian sculptor at the turn of the century, promoter of the "South Slav heroic racial soul."

³ Robert Frangeš-Mihanović (1872–1940): one of the most outstanding pupils of Meštrović.

LADISLAV NOVOMESKÝ: THE CURRENT STATE AND DEVELOPMENT OF SLOVAK CULTURE

Title: *Dnešný stav a vývoj slovenskej kultúry* (The current state and development of Slovak culture)

Originally published: In *Slovenské smery umelecké a kritické* vol. III, 1936, No. 8–9, pp. 289–305.

Language: Slovak

The excerpts used are from Rudolf Chmel, ed., *Kongres slovenských spisovateľov 1936*, (Bratislava: Tatran, 1986), pp. 38–50.

About the author

Ladislav Novomeský [1904, Budapest – 1976, Bratislava]: poet, writer and politician. Born to a tailor's family, he attended grammar school in Budapest and then, between 1919 and 1922, the Institute of Pedagogy in Nitra. During his stay in Prague in the 1920s, he became a member of the Communist Party and was recognized as one of the main representatives of the young left-wing Slovak intelligentsia which grouped around the review *DAV*. He was active as a reporter in the Spanish Civil War. During the emergence of the Slovak state in 1939, he joined the resistance movement and was one of the leaders of the anti-fascist Slovak National Uprising of 1944. Between 1945 and 1950, he acted as the vice-chairman of the Slovak National Council as well as its commissioner for education, the chairman of the *Matica slovenská* foundation and chairman of the Association of Slovak Writers. In 1951, he was arrested and, together with Gustáv Husák and others, sentenced in a political trial in 1954 as a Slovak 'bourgeois nationalist' to several years in prison. He was released in 1955, and following his rehabilitation in 1963, worked at the Institute for Literature of the Slovak Academy of Sciences, becoming one of the main adherents of the Czechoslovak communist reform movement and of the federalization cause. In August 1968, he again became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and served again as a Chairman of the *Matica slovenská*. In terms of political thought, Novomeský is the most eloquent exponent of the search for a synthesis of Slovak national culture with socialist and communist ideals. He was a brilliant modernist poet with great influence and became one of the most important Slovak authors of the twentieth century. At the end of his life, Novomeský had established a great authority in both Slovak and Czech society, even among his political opponents. He is considered to be a prominent figure in Slovak and Czechoslovak history.

Main works: *Nedela* [Sunday] (1927); *Romboid* (1932); *Marx a slovenský národ* [Marx and the Slovak nation] (1933); *Otvorené okná* [Open windows] (1935); *Svätý za dedinou* [The saint beyond the village] (1939); *Dva roky slobodnej školy* [Two years of free school] (1947); *T. G. Masaryk* (1950); *Vila Tereza* (1963).

Context

The establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 as one of the successor states of the Habsburg Monarchy involved the enormous administrative and organizational task of establishing a common governmental and administrative framework out of the different inherited systems of bureaucracy and law. Simultaneously, the officially endorsed idea of Czechoslovakism, informed by a decisively modernist imagination, implied that the cultural convergence and gradual unification of the Czechs and Slovaks into one Czechoslovak nation depended largely on the modernization and overall advancement of the less developed Slovak part of the country. An important part of the concentrated modernization effort was the development of an autonomous educational system and cultural life in Slovakia aimed at rectifying its dissatisfactory state prior to the First World War. In 1919, the *Matica slovenská* was reopened and Comenius University, staffed mostly by Czech professors, was established in the Slovak capital city of Bratislava. In the subsequent year, the Slovak National Theater and many other cultural institutions were opened, gradually creating the foundations of a full-blown Slovak national cultural life.

In fact, during the twenty years of the first Czechoslovak Republic, Slovak intelligentsia grew greatly in number as well as in ambition, self-confidence and inner differentiation, both artistically and politically. On the left end of the political spectrum appeared the revue *DAV*, established in Prague in 1924 by students of socialist leaning who were cast out of *Detvan*, the traditional Slovak student association in Bohemia. Gradually, two factions evolved in the *DAV* group. The first was a radical one drawing its ideas from the Soviet Union and advocating the replacement of the previous literary tradition with proletarian art. The second faction was less radical in its cultural project. Although it was similarly critical of the existing national literary life promoting avant-garde artistic conceptions, it still attributed value to previous literary traditions. Vladimír Clementis and Ladislav Novomeský were the eminent representatives of this second faction that constituted an important and influential attempt towards a merger of modernist aesthetics, communist political ideals and national cultural traditions. While the intellectuals connected with *DAV* grew in significance artistically, with some of the major works of the

group members being published in the second half of the 1920s, the group also gained political prominence with the rise of the leftist anti-fascist movement in Europe.

In May 1936, communist writers and journalist from the *DAV* group played a prominent role in the summoning in Trenčianske Teplice of the first broader meeting of Slovak writers, bringing together figures of different ideological and political orientations. The meeting was inspired by similar events across Europe and the Soviet Union, such as the 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers in Moscow, or the meeting for the Defense of Culture and Peace in Paris. The pro-communist party turned the Congress of Trenčianske Teplice into a political protest against the national and social policies of the Czechoslovak government as much as into an anti-fascist and anti-imperialist manifestation. Novomeský's speech, reproduced below, was one of the most important events of the meeting and stirred up many reactions during the Congress and later in the cultural media. He argued that Slovak culture carried the potential of constituting a synthesis of cultural impulses coming from both the West, standing for artistic sophistication, and the East, standing for new socialist humanity, provided that Slovak artists were able to free themselves from their outdated traditionalism and provincial isolationism. Here-with, at the time of the newly accepted communist tactics of the anti-fascist popular front, Novomeský's main political message was to dismiss the geographical divide between East and West, and to consider another divide between "culture and barbarism," between "cultivation and destruction." According to him, this was a divide that intersected every individual national culture as much as the world as a whole, and was to be the most decisive cultural dichotomy of the near future.

In the mid 1930s Novomeský, similar to many others in the *DAV* group, was still mired between a literary and a political career. In the later years, through his engagement in the Spanish Civil War, the resistance movement against the war-time Slovak state, and his participation to the building of state socialism after the war, politics clearly started shaping Novomeský's agenda and, consequently, the *DAV* group's legacy. In the immediate post-war period this tradition became central for the Slovak communist cultural policy, only to be dismissed as most of its representatives were jailed or killed by their own Party as 'bourgeois nationalists' at the beginning of the 1950s. With their rehabilitation in the following reformist decade the *DAV* history again appeared high in the cultural agenda of the communist regime.

The current state and development of Slovak culture

Themes without definitions

Placed on the crossroads of Western and Eastern influences we have the duty to review, even if only in brief outlines pared to the essentials, the present forms and functions of those cultural efforts whose traditional names are based on geographical locations. The effects of both productive influences and barren sediments of different cultural streams underline this necessity. We are both participants in and witnesses to upcoming ideological clashes which, along with their preludes, have already left an indelible mark on our cultural scene. Yet even in the most immediate context we feel that not only the knowledge of, but also a most vigorous participation in international cultural activities is essential for Slovak artistic creativity. This is required by our quantitative smallness. For it will act as a limit on knowledge, experience, contacts and praxis, and as a precondition of qualitative smallness, of cultural decline and quagmire. All these factors—our position in the middle of very diverse cultural efforts; a future demanding that we take an unambiguous position in the historically determined clash of ideas; and the most contemporary conditions of Slovak cultural development—urge us to explore, consider and absorb the values and productive techniques of international cultural developments as well as to contemplate and look for our own place in the streams of international cultural movements.

East and West

From the beginning it was objectively wrong to apply to Soviet socialist efforts in Russia and, on the other hand, to the state of affairs outside Russia, notions conveying, in a certain geographical sense, the differences between the cultural concepts of the past. The Russian revolution was, after all, an expression of international global efforts, even if it was, in its course and slogans, a sharp reaction to so-called European civilization (reaching its apex in the First World War) and remained limited to the East. Still we have to take into account the international character of the ideas which inspired it, for this is the only way to understand the convergence and blending of Western and Eastern ideas and culture, that splendid process which is the greatest event of contemporary European history.

New (postwar) understanding of the East and its cultural substance is based on the revolutionary efforts of the socialist Soviets. The East was, in

the common imagination, the antithesis of Western culture. Such a reality, the necessity of which was determined also by the specific situation in the Eastern territory, on which the Soviets had to concentrate all their efforts, became, in the vulgar imagination, the historic purpose of the "new oriental culture." So it happened that the new notion of "Eastern culture" merged with the notion of materialism, not in its philosophical sense, as described by Marx or Lenin, but as the embodiment of anti-idealism, primitivism and greed, characteristic of the common, illiterate interpretation of the term. This gave rise, to explore our theme further, to the image of the new East, representing the denial of personality, the destruction of the individual, the liquidation of the private (inner) life of man and his submission to technology, and all other means securing the alleged single aim and meaning of the Eastern culture: the material wealth of the collective. The West, on the other hand, with all its confessed and denied deficiencies, represented, in this common understanding, idealism—again not in the pejorative sense based on Marxist philosophical terminology, even though the West, as the antipode of the Soviet East, was home to this idealist misery as well, but in the sense of ideological potential—or, to make a long story short, the West represented idealism perceived as the starting point and meaning of culture's specific mission. The concept of the development of the human spirit and any progress in the spiritual sphere has, in this vulgar classification of cultures, merged with the notion of Western culture.

The development of the last nineteen years has corrected these notions in Slovakia too, if only to the extent that remarkably positive aspects have been discovered in Eastern culture, attracting the supporters of the previously discussed idea of the West to the real substance of "Eastern" culture. Even the call *ex oriente lux* has been resurrected. Our times witness progressive destruction of the cultural division between East and West. The fault lines are no longer based on geography, but ideology; they divide culture and primitivism, culture and barbarianism. Those elements of Western culture capable of creativity, pursuance and evolution, elements that were "from and for mankind," reached across all European borders to join the so-called "Eastern" culture. Eastern culture and the authentic humanist culture of the West will, today or tomorrow, become one single concept, even in the common perception. Not because, as many think, one or the other alleged antipode would desert its original essence and change its previous character, but because the evolution of the Eastern culture has reached a stage at which it is capable of accepting, employing and perfecting supreme works of art created in those famous "ivory towers" and also of making them accessible; and because in

the West and the sphere of Western culture, the creators of truly magnificent values are being evicted from their towers and turrets.

Those who really believed that the single and ultimate goal of all efforts of the Soviet East is a full stomach can expect, in the words of our wise journalistic vernacular, further and frequent “changes of local conditions towards Europeanization,” or in fact a purposeful cultivation of the backward East. The East, in fact, does consider “the full stomach,” i.e. economic balance and social order, to be preconditions for mankind’s cultural development, but the fact that all forces and efforts were harnessed in this or that way in order to create material security does not mean that this was seen as the single and ultimate meaning of existence. On the contrary, after the necessary foundations of social security were successfully created, new and unimagined horizons of cultural development opened up. Possibilities for omni-directional development of human existence were created. The East offers to mankind a perspective described by Marx in ‘German Ideology,’ in which “no man is tied to an exclusive sphere of activities, but may study any branch he pleases: the society organizes general production and enables him to do this today and that tomorrow, to fish in the morning, to hunt at noon, to tend sheep in the evening, to criticize, if he pleases, after his meals, and all of this does not make him a fisherman, hunter, shepherd or critic.” We pay attention to these, as of today, unequal existential functions, guaranteed to man in the so-called Eastern society (only there, so far), for at the same time they demonstrate the unilaterally limited possibilities of man in the West, which boasts about—what an irony—its respect for personality and freedom of the individual. [...]

Between the West and the East

In a certain secondary sense, within strict temporal limits, we can speak of Western and Eastern culture, because the effacement of borders is still in progress and the type of culture which would represent the synthesis of the Western *sophistication* and Eastern *universal human desires* and their fulfillment has not yet materialized.

Reflecting this state of affairs, and especially the need for comprehensible terms, based on traditional concepts, which may be needed to define the future of Slovak cultural development, we still can speak of Western and Eastern cultural streams even if they are merging.

As man, the creator and user of cultural values, is turning into the common denominator of both these zones, our perception of the West will focus on its reservoir of cultural wealth accumulated by human creativity, and constricted

and liberated by the social transformations of the past centuries. The West will be perceived as a sum of experience created by the inventiveness and genius of renowned artists who strove to (as they were destined to) “become the end and purpose in themselves.” As they were not molded by the “true realm of freedom,” nor have they experienced “free development of human creativity,” to keep at least an appearance of the essential freedom, they had been hiding in the already mentioned “ivory towers.” The West to us, in a nutshell, is a synonym of *sophistication*, created and accumulated, now and before, through the great self-sacrifice of its creators. The East, changed as it was by the Russian revolution, offers a *guideline*, a vision of a world, a safe method to explore phenomena, their origins and transformations. It offers freedom of perception of things and processes, dispels limitations, strips away the residues of prejudices and falsehoods accumulated over the course of centuries. The art of writing is, in the first place, the art of seeing. Adequate perception of the world and its phenomena would be unthinkable and impossible without the ideas stimulating Eastern Europe at present. [...]

The cultural history of our country is in fact a history of the cross-pollination of Eastern and Western influences taking place in times when such geographic classification of cultural concepts had its justification. In spite of the magnificent process of wiping out the frontiers between West and East, and with the view of the still existing demarcation lines of cultural zones, we suggest that Slovak cultural life preserves this geographical tradition for the sake of its quality, and its future. It can find a place of honor in this blending of “East” and “West”; it can represent an emerging synthesis of new ideas from the so-called East, expressing the fundamental desires of mankind, and the cultivated manners of the so-called West. This is an ideal predetermination of Slovak culture, as well as a perspective for its further development. Like Ilya Ehrenburg¹ said in his beautiful simile on the Slovak cultural situation, in times when we could not yet observe the blending of the post-war East and West: “a tree does not break in rival winds but rises high instead.”

Reasons and stimuli

The need to link our cultural life with the world’s cultural development is an axiom, a precondition, of all activities claiming to bear a relationship to culture. This is why we completely ignore certain efforts for cultural autarky, clad by its supporters in the meaningless clichés of “sovereignty,” “distinct-

¹ Ilya Ehrenburg (1891–1967): prominent Soviet writer and journalist.

iveness,” declaring that the source of culture lies in the nebulous concepts of “solid character” or “common sense” of the nation or of the people. These efforts are not worthy of serious reflection, if for no other reason than because their promoters themselves (to be found in political newspapers or on political platforms) do not deem it necessary to preserve the “distinctiveness,” or to refer to the common sense of the people in the non-cultural sphere, and even the fresher of their arguments are copied from foreign textbooks teaching cultural narrowness and anti-cultural barbarism.

Having said that, we do not intend to build a dam preventing access by new movements in Slovak culture to sources created by the traditions and riches of folk culture and art in particular. On the contrary. For example, modern Slovak poetry is still defined, theoretically and practically, by its relation to folk poetry. The same goes for other art forms as well as for all creative efforts. Their contact with folk culture is made more natural and urgent by the fact that it is governed, instinctively, of course, by the same principles of existential ideas and human desires, whose victorious authenticity unites yesterday’s West and East. Those who would deny the need for our new cultural activities to turn towards the new ideas of our times—that were “Eastern” only yesterday—cannot speak of the fertility of Slovak folk culture. On the other hand, it is only in the light of these ideas and the scientific principles they’ve revealed that we can not only decipher but also create an existential compass out of symbols and metaphors hidden in legends, songs, tales and stories of Slovak folk art. Ideals expressed in Slovak folk culture (let us take a closer look at what is hidden in our legends of robbers, for example) are identical with ideas, which are, East and West, being transformed into principles liberating mankind. [...]

It really is impossible to claim that our cultural life could be hermetically isolated from outside influence. Some impulses, especially literary ones, which have ushered in a new era in the place of their origin, have touched, sporadically, our literary life too. Modern post-war Slovak literature—still dominant in our cultural environment—will soon be in the twentieth year of its development, a period long enough to raise the question of why it has still not escaped its parochialism. Ten, fifteen years ago, we diagnosed the cause as conservative traditionalism, meaning the process of chewing on what has already been masticated and even digested. Yet even the transplantation of foreign—and new—impulses has not raised our literature to a more formidable level. [...]

Our literary life of the last decade was not isolated completely. It had some contact with the outside world which we’d like to greet most enthusias-

tically. Still it offers a bleak picture. The “worldliness,” the topicality of our work, the fact that we’re dealing with the same themes and using the same techniques as “the world”—whether Eastern or Western—is not a self-redemptive panacea, and won’t, *a priori*, create great works. The end of the world, or “worldliness” (in the sense of an artistic level comparable with world literature) is not caused by the miserable quality of the models which our literati have adopted, but above all, by their half-heartedness, idleness, and their narrow-mindedness. The crisis of ideological and so-called formal impulses, which have, as we have already mentioned, ushered in a new era in the place of their origins, is, in our environment, a crisis of our conditions and our personalities. [...]

Personality and idea are not separate figures. They condition and create one another. The critique of the absence of national personalities does not close the chapter on our national situation. Just like the Czech modernism of the 90s proclaimed, we too need to “open the windows wide to Europe.” We need the winds of great, truly human ideological directions from all the around the world and of the respective artistic movements to blow across Slovakia. To guarantee the future of Slovakia’s culture we have to subscribe to universal humanist cultural efforts. [...]

Borderlines of cultures do not copy meridians anymore, but in the ideological sense, cut across society itself. Culture and barbarism, these are the future poles of different visions of the cultivation (or destruction) of scholarship. We would like Slovak cultural efforts to be cultural indeed, to play honorable and significant roles in the development of a new culture of mankind, full of authentic human desires, and to defend it against barbaric aggression, whether in the name of “passionate nationalism,” “racial superiority,” “ecclesiastically-religious panaceas” or directly—“fascism”!

Translated by Pavol Lukáč

MILLOSH GJERGJ NIKOLLA: WE, THE SONS OF THE NEW AGE; THE HIGHLANDER RECITAL

Title: *Të birtë e shekullit të ri* (We, the sons of the new age); *Reçitali i Malcorit* (The highlander recital)

Originally published: in Migjeni, *Vargje t'lira*, Tirana, Ismail Mal. Osmani Botonjës, 1944

Language: Albanian.

The text used is from Migjeni, *Free Verse. A bilingual edition*, translation and introduction by Robert Elsie (Pejë: Dukagjini, 2001).

About the author

Millesh Gjergj Nikolla (known under his literary acronym **Migjeni**) [1911, Shkodra (*It.* Scutari, *Srb.* Skadar) – 1938, Torre Pellice, near Turin]: writer and one of the most powerful poetical voices in interwar Albanian literature. Born to an Orthodox Christian family in which Serbo-Croatian was the dominant language, young Millesh first attended the Serbian primary school in Shkodra. In 1925 he was enrolled in a secondary school in Bitola (*Gr.* Monastiri, *Tur.* Manastır), where he studied Old Church Slavonic, Russian and Greek, as well as Latin and French. In 1927, he entered the seminary of St. John the Theologian, also in Bitola, where he studied until 1932. He became acquainted not only with the tradition of the Orthodox East, but also with the Western literary tradition. It was during this period that young Millesh started to suffer from tuberculosis. He abandoned priesthood and in 1932 began to work as a teacher in the primary school of Vrakë, a village nearby Shkodra inhabited entirely by Montenegrins. His literary debut was a short story entitled *Sokrat i vuejtun a pod derr i kënaqun* (Suffering Socrates or the contented pig), which was published in the monthly *Illyria* with the pseudonym Migjeni. The years he spent in Vrakë and Shkodra were formative for the young poet. He began to publish the first of his many path-breaking poems in *Illyria*. In the spring of 1936, he was transferred to the village of Puka in the hopes that the mountain air would improve his health. There, he experienced the misery of everyday life of the Albanian highlanders, a subject much favored by other authors of the epoch, such as Father Gjergj Fishta. It was during this period that he wrote most of his poems and some of his best short prose sketches, all of which were enthusiastically received. His first and only collection of poems was published in Tirana in 1936, but was immediately banned. In December 1937, already seriously ill, he left for Turin hoping to receive an appropriate medical treatment. His condition soon deteriorated, and he passed away in August

1938. His premature death only augmented his fame, especially among the young radical circles. It was due to this fascination that after the war, with the establishment of the communist regime, Migjeni was depicted as one of the precursors of socialist realism in Albanian literature. For the same reason, in the wake of the changes of 1989 and 1990, he lost his primacy within the Albanian literary canon. Nevertheless, his poetry is still recognized to be a milestone in the development of Albanian literature.

Main works: *Vepra* [Works] (1988, 2006).

Context

Migjeni entered Albanian literature in one of its most crucial moments. During the preceding 'National Awakening' period, practically all Albanian literati lived within the diaspora (see **Sami Frashëri**, *Albania, what it was, what is and what it will be*). The social and political turmoil of the 1920s hindered all cultural activity in Albania. However, the political stability and relative economic progress of the early 1930s constituted a turning point. Parallel to heated discussions on social and cultural issues (see **Branko Merxhani**, *The organization of the chaos*), literature also had to face similar challenges.

In the late 1920s, Albanian literature was still under the strong influence of patterns inherited from the earlier period, that is to say, Romantic in form and nationalist in content. These tendencies still prevailed during the 1930s, reaching their peak with the epic poem *Lahuta e Malcis* (The highland lute), the *opus vitae* of the Franciscan father **Gjergj Fishta**. However, already in the poems and comedies of Andon Zako (1866–1930), better known under his literary pseudonym Çajupi, realist and modernist motifs had emerged. Arguably, the most prominent prose writer of the period, Ernest Koliqi (1903–1975) elaborated on themes from the everyday life of northern Albania in his short stories. Under the influence of Italian writers, Koliqi broke away from the rather neo-romantic efforts typical of the 1920s. What Koliqi contributed to the development of prose in the northern (Gheg) Albanian dialect, Dhimiter Pasko (1907–1967), known better under his literary pseudonym Mitrush Kuteli, achieved for the southern (Tosk) dialect. Both of them introduced the oral forms of their native dialect to the exigencies of modern prose.

Within this constellation of publicists, playwrights and writers, two poets, who were to become the leading figures of literary modernity in Albania, made an impressive and original appearance. These were Millosh Gjergj Ni-

kolla and Llazar Gushe (1899–1987), known by his literary pseudonym Lasgush Poradeci. Poradeci's poetry escapes any effort of definition with reference to standard poetic schools or trends. While portraying nature in panoramic fashion, he masterfully focuses on details, especially in the description of his small native town Pogradec and lake Ohrid (*Alb. Ohër*).

Contrary to Poradeci's poetry of human passion, Migjeni chose to reflect on human pain. During the communist period, Migjeni's poetry was interpreted in the context of revolutionary poetry, and was conceived to be ideologically leftist, foreshadowing the revolutionary transformation following the Second World War. This allowed literary historians of the epoch to see Migjeni as a precursor of socialist realism, especially with reference to such poems as *Të birtë e shekullit të ri* (We, the sons of the new age) and *Kânga e rinis* (Song of the youth). But other critics consider Migjeni's poems to be modernist to the heart, as indicated in the very title of his sole published volume, *Vargje t'lira* (Free verses), and argue that they are informed by an individualism that draws upon the modern human condition. His call for social justice is not the voice of the masses, but the voice of a desperate human being envisioning the advent of a Nietzschean super-man, a theme especially evident in the *Reçitali i malsorit* (The highlander recital) or *Trajtat e mbinjeriut* (The forms of the super-man). Similar to Branko Merxhani's writings, Migjeni embraced the vitalist philosophical trends and wished to portray Albanian realities through them.

Although he had received religious education in Catholic and Muslim Shkodra, and Orthodox Bitola, Migjeni eventually rejected both the idea of God and the Church. As presented in the poem *Parathanje e parathanjeve* (Preface of prefaces), for Migjeni God remained distant from everyday life, in complete obscurity. No help can be expected from God, says Migjeni, because He has abandoned this world. The hypocrisy of religious hierarchs was another central theme in his poetry, especially in such poems as *Blasfemi* (Blasphemy) and *Kânga skandaloze* (Scandalous song). Contrary to the erotic poetry of Poradeci, Migjeni expressed his erotic desires only in few poems, but in a highly symbolic manner. It is the misery of everyday life that predominates the overall mood, as exemplified by his powerful *Poema e Mjerimit* (Poem of poverty). No other Albanian poet ever spoke with such a potent voice.

Following the fall of the communist regime in Albania, Migjeni's poetry became a target of criticism. His fall from grace can be linked to the prominent position he held in the communist literary canon. However, an even more politically controversial issue was Migjeni's Orthodox Serbian background. Some nationalist publicists have gone so far as to deny his 'Alba-

nianness.’ However, such opinions were decisively rebutted by critics and historians of literature who believe that Migjeni remains an Albanian poet simply because he wrote only in Albanian. What is needed is not a redefinition of his place in the Albanian literary canon, something which is not to be disputed, but rather a critical re-assessment of Migjeni’s literary work.

RH

We, the sons of the new age

We, the sons of a new age,
 Leaving the old to its “sanctity,”
 Have clenched our fists
 To fight new battles
 And triumph...
 We, the sons of a new age,
 Scions of a soil drenched in tears
 Where the sweat of our brows has been shed in vain,
 For our land was the prey of foreigners
 Whose fury had to be paid for dearly,
 We, the sons of a new age,
 Brothers born and raised in misery,
 When our ultimate and joyful hour
 Rang out
 We learned to say:
 We will not be lost
 In the bloody game of human history,
 No! no! We will not be forever lost.
 We will have victory!
 Victory of conscience and free thought!
 Nor will we, for the sake of the degenerates
 Of the past in search of their “sanctity,”
 Wallow again into a mire of misery
 And return once more to our sad lament,
 Our monotonous lifeless lament of bondage,
 And be but an irritation in the human brain.
 We, the sons of a new age,
 With our all-consuming ardour,
 Will take up new battles
 And sacrifice ourselves for victory.

The highlander recital

Oh, had I but a fist with the might
 To strike at the heart of the mute mountain!
 So that it too might know what weakness means,
 And writhe like a giant in the pains of death.

Like a phantom, some muddled spirit,
 Heir to suffering and hardship,
 Do I roam the mountainside, kept away by hunger,
 And moan with the unrequited pangs of instinct.

The mountain is silent, though each day
 On its skin, in a terrible gamble
 I strive to find a mouthful more,
 Though midst mockery, lies and treacherous hopes.

The mountain is silent—and in silence derides.
 I suffer—I am dying of starvation,
 What of me? When will it be my turn to laugh?
 Or must I first perish?

Oh, had I but a fist with the might
 To strike at the heart of the mute mountain!
 To see it reel from my illegal blow...
 And to be the one to laugh serene.

**Translated by Robert Elsie in Migjeni, *Free Verse. A bilingual edition*,
 translation and introduction by R. Elsie (Pejë: Dukagjini, 2001).**

TEVFİK FİKRET: HALUK'S CREDO

Title: *Haluk'un Amentüsü* (Haluk's credo)

Originally published: *Haluk'un defteri* (Haluk's notebook), Istanbul, Tanin Matbaası, 1911

Language: Ottoman Turkish

The excerpts used are from Kemal Sılay's *An anthology of Turkish literature* (Bloomington Indiana: Cem Publishing, 1996), pp. 259–260.

About the author

Tevfik Fikret [1867, Istanbul – 1915, Istanbul]: poet and pivotal figure in the founding of modern Turkish literature. In 1888, Fikret graduated from the 'Imperial School of Galatasaray,' founded in 1867 on the model of the French *lycée* for the education of civil servants. In 1891, he was already a prize-winning poet and a prominent member of Istanbul's literary circles. After briefly working as a Turkish literature teacher at Galatasaray, he resigned in protest of the government's decision to pay wages in arrears. In 1896, he began to edit the journal *Servet-i fûnun* (The merit of the sciences), which was to become the most significant journal during the reign of Abdülhamid II, a time marked by severe limitations on the freedom of expression. Under the direction of Fikret, *Servet-i fûnun* became a stronghold of liberal, anti-establishment and progressive minds, and acted as a seedbed for the 'New Literature' movement that shattered the traditional canons of Ottoman literature. During the same period, Fikret began teaching at Robert College, a missionary-operated American high school that mostly catered to the non-Muslim members of the Empire. In 1908, he enthusiastically supported the Young Turk revolution, and joined the exuberant post-revolutionary press by founding the influential *Tanin* (The resounding) along with the most well-known pro-revolutionary literati of the day. Yet, when pressured to turn the newspaper into an organ of the Committee of Union and Progress (hereafter CUP), he boldly refused and quit the journal. Later, he was appointed headmaster of the 'Imperial High School,' but he resigned soon afterwards. Opposing the CUP's coup d'état in 1912, he retreated to his house, where he would die three years later. He dedicated many of his poems (such as the one chosen here) to his son Haluk, his only hope for the future, who became a Presbyterian priest in his later years, long after Fikret's death. That Haluk 'rejected' his original faith caused debate among the nationalist and conservative circles about the viability of Fikret's optimism regarding the future of Turkish youth, and about his guiding role as a father. Tevfik Fikret's naïve and fervent progressivism, and his unabashed con-

tempt for the traditional constraints of daily life, religion and art, made him a recurrent target of conservatives and an enduring icon for generations of Republican modernizers.

Main works: *Rûbab-ı şikeste* [The broken violin] (1900); *Haluk'un defteri* [Haluk's notebook] (1911); *Rûbabın cevabı* [The response of the violin] (1911); *Şermin* (1914); *Tarih-i kadim* [Ancient history] (n.d., reprinted in 1928).

Context

Tevfik Fikret remains one of the most prominent figures of the Turkish literary canon, due no less to his formidable literary achievements as to his embodiment of the secular, materialist and progressive outlook which was later to constitute the governing ethos of the Republican state. It is important to note, however, that Tevfik Fikret was not a nationalist poet. On the contrary, the literary school to which he belonged, the *Servet-i fûnun*, was to be criticized by the early Republican generation for remaining aloof from nationalist sentiment and for its use of high blown language whose only audience was the Ottoman cultural elite. Yet, of all the members of this school (which declared its motto to be 'art for art's sake'), it was Tevfik Fikret who both overtly expressed social concerns and also faced the most severe criticisms for his unabashed condemnation of tradition, authority and conformism.

It should be also mentioned that in an earlier collection of poems he published under the title *Tarih-i kadim* (Ancient history), Fikret displayed an utter distaste for history, which, for him, was merely a pack of unfounded myths that only served the purposes of power-holders. His condemnation of the entire human past, which he claimed was characterized only by strife and raw violence among human beings, stood in stark contrast to the 'historiophile' mood of the time when nationalists were eagerly fetishizing the power and glory of the Ottoman Empire and of the Turkish states of yore.

In the poem chosen here, Tevfik Fikret characteristically reveals himself as a figure with a profound dedication for universal human morality but, with no need for a higher source of reference such as religion or the nation. What perhaps made him such a highly controversial figure was the power of his poems for those who were able to penetrate their convoluted language, with which, without taking recourse with any mobilizing *topos*, Fikret nonetheless was able to express an overt yearning for radical change, a sentiment shared by many segments of society at the time. In a poem on Istanbul written before 1908, he depicted the age-old capital as a 'beautiful prostitute,' demanding that she covered herself in shame—thus, perhaps giving the first indication of a process of revolution that would in due course topple Istanbul and

the political and moral worldview that she represented. That poem is said to have been a favorite of Mustafa Kemal himself, whose secularism was inspired no less by the kind of non-religious, universal morality that Tevfik Fikret personified.

The poem in question is a polemic against the Muslim daily prayer (the *Amentü*). Taught to each child, it includes a statement of belief in God as the source of all good and evil, in his holy books, his prophets and angels, in the day of judgment, in fate and in resurrection after death. Fikret does acknowledge the existence of God, but only as a divine and sublime power, and regards the Quran as a product of the eternal evolution of nature and humanity. Placing man at the center of the universe, he harshly denounces a belief in the sublime powers of the angels or the devil. In place of the traditional tenets and protocols of religion, he proposes the establishment of novel and earthly values (each of which is expounded in a couplet), such as the power of Man, the unity of all humankind, progress, freedom and science. By cherishing these values, Fikret contends that humanity breeds the potential “to create heaven on this earth.” As such, he challenges the Islamic notion that real happiness lies in the afterlife, and hence urges men to strive for it in this world, even if, he acknowledges, this might only remain a dream. For him, the entire human past represents a vast and ruthless bloodbath. In order to make the future different, he argues that one needs to ‘believe’ that all men are brothers, that one’s fatherland is the world (here evoking the fêted verses of **İbrahim Şinasi**), and that one’s ‘nation’ comprises the entire humankind.

Haluk’un Amentüsü was written at a time when Tevfik Fikret was highly disillusioned with the outcomes of the Young Turk revolution. Withdrawn from everyday political life and refusing to entertain a particular political agenda, he produced his poems only to express his overall faith in progress, freedom, social equality and human brotherhood. Overtaken by intense pessimism, he hoped that a better future would be shaped by the new generation. Personified in the image of his son Haluk, the next generation would be the first to overcome age-old traditional constraints of power and authority. Throughout the Republican era, the poems dedicated to Haluk remained the focus of discussion regarding Turkish culture and identity. Fikret’s liberal, anti-establishment perspective, as well as his uncompromising universalism made him the primary target of the conservatives and the hard-core nationalists, who regarded him a ‘non-national’ and decadent mouthpiece of the Christian missionaries and the cosmopolitan Ottoman elite.

Haluk's credo

There is a universal power, supreme and limitless
Holy and sublime, with all my heart, so
do I believe

The earth is my homeland, my nation all humankind;
A person becomes human only by knowing this, so
do I believe

We are Satan, and jinn, there's no devil, no angels
Human beings will turn this world into paradise, so
do I believe

The perfect is immanent in creation, in that perfection
By way of the Torah, of the Gospels, of the Quran
do I believe

The children of humanity are each other's siblings...a dream?
Then so be it, for in that dream, with all my heart and soul,
do I believe

No one eats human flesh; deep down, in this solace
– Forgetting my ancient ancestors for a moment–
do I believe

Blood nourishes violence and violence blood; this enmity
Is a flame in the blood that blood never quenches, so
do I believe

Surely this graveyard-existence will be followed
By refulgent resurrection, with utter certainty, so
do I believe

Before the miracle of that great sorcerer, reason,
Superstition will sink frustrated, into the earth, so
do I believe

Translated by Walter G. Andrews in Kemal Silay ed., *An anthology of Turkish literature* (Bloomington Indiana, Cem Publishing, 1996), pp. 259–260.

WITOLD GOMBROWICZ: FERDYDURKE

Title: *Ferdydurke*

Originally published: Warsaw, Rój, 1937

Language: Polish

The excerpts used are from *Ferdydurke*, translated by Eric Mosbacher with an introduction by Czesław Miłosz (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 160–174.

About the author

Witold Gombrowicz [1904, Małoszyce (near Kielce) – 1969, Vence (France)]: writer, dramatist and publicist. He was born into a well-off gentry family in the provincial region of central Poland. Gombrowicz studied law at Warsaw University and spent a year at the Institut des Hautes Etudes Internationales in Paris. On the eve of the Second World War, as a young lawyer, a literary critic, and an active member of the literary circles of the capital, he started publishing in Warsaw. In August 1939, he moved to Argentina, where he spent almost 20 years working as a bank clerk, writing novels, plays, and keeping diaries, some of which were translated into Spanish and published in Argentina. In the post-1945 period he continued publishing in *Kultura*, a Polish journal published in Paris. Published beyond the reach of state censorship, *Kultura* was not officially available in Poland. The first large-scale appearance of Gombrowicz's literary work in Poland was connected to the liberalization of the communist regime in 1956. In the early 1960s, he received a literary scholarship from the Ford Foundation, moved to West Berlin, and then to France, where he spent the rest of his life. In 1969 Gombrowicz married his secretary Rita Labrosse. During the last years of his life, he enjoyed international recognition, and in 1967 was awarded with the International Publishers Prize. Gombrowicz died in his house in Vence, near Nice, where he had lived since 1964. His work consists of several novels that contributed significantly to the development of the Polish literary canon. Although his works were banned in Poland, Gombrowicz started to become a renowned figure in Polish literary life already by the 1960s. Official campaigns against Gombrowicz targeted his alleged 'vicious' anticommunism, his homosexuality, and suggested his cooperation with the German revisionist policy toward Poland. In fact, already in his first novel *Ferdydurke* Gombrowicz commented ironically on Polish patriotism of the inter-war period and evoked his homosexuality. The second most influential work of Gombrowicz was the *Trans-Atlantyk*, a book describing his bitter start in Argentina and providing a mercilessly critical look at what he considered to

be the idiocy and artificiality of national patriotism. His works were not limited to Polish cultural debates. Gombrowicz wrote parodies of Shakespeare (*Iwona, księżniczka Burgunda*) as well as other fundamental works of world literature. It is argued that his works established an aesthetic framework that foreshadowed the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre as well as post-structuralism, although the writer distanced himself from the attempts to interpret his oeuvre in philosophical terms. He himself stressed the linguistic import of his works (almost all of Gombrowicz's works were written in Polish). He also succeeded in enriching the popular language with many neologisms. Gombrowicz is a point of reference for the Polish liberals and the target of criticism of the radical right (the latter continuously seeking to reduce his presence in the school curricula). Although contested in ideological terms, he is broadly acknowledged as the most important Polish writer of the twentieth century.

Main works: *Pamiętnik z okresu dojrzewania* [Diaries from the puberty] (1933, second edition as *Bakakaj* 1957); *Ferdydurke* (1937); *Iwona, księżniczka Burgunda* [Iwona princess of Burgund] (1938); *Ślub* [The Wedding] (1953); *Trans-Atlantyk* (1953); *Dziennik* [Diary] (1957–1966); *Kosmos* (1965); *Operetka* [The Operetta] (1966); *Pornografia* [Pornography] (1966).

Context

Gombrowicz was an outsider to inter-war Polish literary life, as he did not participate in the heated artistic and political debates. He distanced himself from the literary manifestations of patriotism, and, using irony, demonstrated the artificiality of compulsory love towards one's motherland, state and political leaders. A member of the Warsaw literary circles, he was recognized as a promising author. Still, he occupied a marginal position in the Polish cultural life of the inter-war period because he had his own ways in terms of his aesthetic and stylistic approach, and because of his (lack of) ideological affiliation. His position in local literary life deteriorated considerably after the beginning of the Second World War. He decided to stay in Argentina throughout the war (an issue addressed by the main character of his novel *Trans-Atlantyk*) instead of having to submit himself to the national cause during another war for freedom. After 1945, his cooperation with an independent emigrant group around the review *Kultura* (edited in Paris by Jerzy Giedroyc) was condemned by both the Polish communist regime and the conservative-nationalist emigrant circles. Gombrowicz gained a distinctive place in the Polish literary canon only after the first decade following his death. Starting from the 1970s, due to the activity of 'underground' publishers, his oeuvre was received with interest not only by literary critics and historians but by a broad public in Poland. The quality of Gombrowicz's work transcends

the aesthetic and theoretical sphere. In discussions regarding Polish cultural and national identity his works are interpreted not only as literary products but as statements constituting an individual ideological stance. In all, despite his initial distance from Polish political debates, and considering his ideological stance, Gombrowicz is one of the most recognizable Polish writers—a clear counterpart of the charismatic codifier of nationalist imaginary, **Henryk Sienkiewicz**.

In *Ferdydurke*, Gombrowicz depicted, within the framework of a grotesque story, several important features of Polish culture in the inter-war period. The novel articulates on the nightmare of many adults: finding yourself back in your high school. The hero is forced to adapt himself to the idiotic regime of the school, where he and his peers are treated as innocent lambs stuffed with patriotic values and “our great literature.” Gombrowicz ridiculed the conservative and patriotic regime as well as the outdated customs of the gentry. His criticism also included an ironic picture of the ‘progressive’ intelligentsia, no less artificial than the archaic culture of the Polish gentleman. The question of individual maturity is, without any doubt, the core of the story, but it is important to underline the way Gombrowicz questions both the Polish national canon and European culture as a whole. A particular target of his ironic comments and criticism was the Romantic language that sought to describe even primordial realities. From the beginning, *Ferdydurke* was praised by liberal and leftist literary critics (Bruno Schulz, Artur Sandauer), and criticized by right-wing radicals, such as Stanisław Piasecki. Unfortunately, any wider intellectual debate on this novel became impossible, and the patriotic ethos of national sacrifice and martyrdom went unquestioned until the end of the Second World War (see **Aleksander Kamiński**, *Stones for the rampart*).

Ferdydurke did not enjoy a wide readership during the communist regime, though it was increasingly appreciated by literary critics and foreign readers. A Spanish translation was published in 1947, and *Ferdydurke* was subsequently translated into many other European languages. Beyond any doubt, Gombrowicz was one of most influential emigrant writers. His cultural critique as well as his philosophy had a formative influence on the work of Sławomir Mrożek and many others. His Polish ‘comeback’ in the late 1970s and 1980s led to a wider celebration of his work in the 1990s, when his oeuvre finally overcame the bitter fate of émigré literature. During the Polish radical right’s term in office (from 2005 to 2007) *Ferdydurke* was excluded from the school curricula. The decision, taken by the nationalist minister of education, met with strong criticism by various segments of the Polish intelligentsia,

and was condemned by adherents of diverse political affiliations. This conflict illustrates the present-day relevance of Gombrowicz, whose criticism of primordial nationalism remains a relevant political statement.

MG

Ferdydurke

He was the sad, anemic body who had maintained in the staff-room that biscuits were going down. He took his seat, opened his book, brushed the crumbs from his waistcoat, closed his mouth, pulled down his cuffs to prevent his sleeves from wearing at the elbows, repressed something in himself, and crossed his legs. Then he sighed, and tried to say something. The din redoubled; everyone yelled, with the possible exception of Siphon, who adopted a positive attitude. The master looked at his class, pursed his lips, opened them, and then closed them again. The boys went on yelling. The master frowned and made a gesture of annoyance, adjusted his sleeves, drummed on his desk, thought about something a long, long way away, took out his watch, put it on the desk, sighed, again suppressed something in himself or swallowed something, and devoted a long moment to collecting his energy. Finally he banged the top of his desk with his book and called out:

"That'll do! Silence! The lesson is about to begin!"

At this the whole class like one man (again with the exception of Siphon) expressed the imperious necessity of immediately leaving the room.

The master, who was known to his pupils as Droopy because of his worn and frail appearance, smiled bitterly.

"That'll do! he said in the acid tone that came naturally to him. So you would like to go to the lavatory! So would the soul like to go to paradise, wouldn't it? And why can't I leave the room? Sit down, all of you! Nobody may leave the room!"

No fewer than seven boys thereupon produced certificates testifying to various complaints which had prevented them from doing their homework. Four others complained of violent headache, another had a rash, and yet another convulsions.

"Gracious heavens!" Droopy exclaimed. "Why doesn't anyone give me a certificate explaining that through no fault of my own it is impossible for me to do my work? Why can't I have convulsions? What I want you to tell me is why I should have to come here every day, except Sundays and public holidays, instead of having convulsions. Quiet! The certificates are faked, and you are nothing but a lot of malingerers. Sit down, I know you!"

Three boys went up to his desk and started telling him a good story about Jews and birds, but he stopped his ears.

"No, no!" he groaned, "spare me, I mustn't listen to you, spare me, we must get on with the lesson. Supposing the headmaster walked in!"

At this he started trembling, looked towards the door, and paled with fright.

"And supposing the inspector caught us? I warn you, gentlemen, that the inspector is paying a visit to the school at this very moment. It is a fact. I warn you. Enough of this folly, let us be ready in case the inspector walks in. Let me see. Which of you know his lessons best? Tell me, so that I may shine by letting him shine... Well? Doesn't anybody know anything? You'll be the ruin of me! Come, come, somebody must know a little about something, speak up and tell me frankly. Ah! Pylaszczkiewicz! Pylaszczkiewicz, speak up! Thank you, Pylaszczkiewicz, I've always thought you a boy I could rely on. But what are you good at, Pylaszczkiewicz? Which of our glorious poets do you know best?"

Siphon rose and replied:

"Excuse me, sir! If you ask me in front of the inspector, I shall answer, but in the meantime I cannot tell you what I know best, because that would mean betraying myself and my principles."

"Very well, then," said the master. 'Pylaszczkiewicz's feelings in the matter are most praiseworthy, and I was only joking. Principles above everything, of course! Let me see, then," he went on severely, looking at the syllabus, "what are we in for today? Oh, yes, explain and demonstrate why the great poet Słowacki¹ awakens our love, admiration and ecstasy. Well, then, gentlemen, first I shall say my piece and then you shall say yours. Quiet!" he called out, and all the boys bent over their desks, holding their heads in their hands, while Droopy surreptitiously opened his text-book, shut his mouth, sighed, suppressed something in himself, and began:

"Hm! Hm! Hm! Well, then why does Słowacki arouse our admiration, love and ecstasy? Why do we weep with the poet when we read that angelic poem *In Switzerland*? Why does exaltation swell our breasts when we listen to the superb and heroic stanzas of 'The Spirit King'?² Why is there no escaping the magic and seduction of the *Balladyna*?³ Why do the sorrows of

¹ Juliusz Słowacki (1809–1849): a Romantic poet exiled to France in 1831.

² Juliusz Słowacki, *Król Duch*, published 1847.

³ Juliusz Słowacki, *Balladyna*, published 1839, its first performance took place in 1862.

*Lilla Weneda*⁴ rend our hearts? Hm! Why? Because, gentlemen, Słowacki was a great poet. Wałkiewicz, tell me why! Tell me, Wałkiewicz. Why the enchantment, the love, the tears, the exaltation, the magic? Why are our hearts rent? Tell me, Wałkiewicz!" [...]

"Because he was a great poet, sir," said Wałkiewicz.

The boys were carving up the desk-tops with their pen-knives and screwing up little balls of paper and putting them in the ink-wells. The master sighed, choked, looked at his watch, and continued as follows:

"He was a great poet, don't forget that he was a great poet. Why do we feel love, admiration, delight? Because he was a great poet, a great poet. You ignorant dunderheads, get this firmly fixed in your heads and repeat after me: Juliusz Słowacki was a great poet, a great poet, we love Juliusz Słowacki, and his poems delight us because he was a great poet—and because his verses are of immortal beauty which arouses our deepest admiration."

This level of exposition got on one boy's nerves and he had an acute attack of the fidgets. When he could stand it no longer he burst out:

"But if he has no effect on me whatever, if he simply doesn't interest me, if I can't read two verses of his without falling asleep... Heaven help me, sir, but how am I to be sent into transports of delight if I am not sent into transports of delight?"

His eyes were nearly popping out of his head. He sat down again, as if overwhelmed by what he had said. His naive confession took the master's breath away.

"For heaven's sake hold your tongue, Gałkiewicz," he said. "Gałkiewicz, you're trying to ruin me. No marks for Gałkiewicz. He doesn't realize what he is saying."

Gałkiewicz: "But I don't understand, sir. I don't understand how I can be sent into transports of delight if I am not sent into transports of delight."

The master: "But Gałkiewicz, how can you not be sent into transports of delight if I have already explained to you a thousand times that you are sent into transports of delight?"

Gałkiewicz: "You have explained it, sir, but I am not sent into transports of delight."

The master: "In that case it's a personal peculiarity. Gałkiewicz seems not to be intelligent. Other people are sent into transports of delight."

⁴ Juliusz Słowacki, *Lilla Weneda*, published 1840, first performance 1863.

Galkiewicz: "No! No! On my word of honour they're not, sir! Nobody can be sent into transports of delight by Słowacki's poetry, because nobody reads him, except at school, when they're forced to."

The master: "Galkiewicz, for heaven's sake sit down and keep quiet. The explanation is that only a limited number of intelligent and cultivated people are capable of appreciating him."

Galkiewicz: "Nothing of the sort, sir, even cultivated people don't read him. Nobody reads him, sir, nobody at all!"

The master: "Galkiewicz, I have a wife and a young child. At least have pity on the child, Galkiewicz. Galkiewicz, it is a well-known and established fact that great poetry necessarily arouses our admiration. Now, Juliusz Słowacki was a great poet... It may be that Słowacki doesn't move you, my dear Galkiewicz, but don't tell me, don't tell me that you're not profoundly moved by Mickiewicz, Byron, Pushkin, Shelley, Goethe..."

Galkiewicz: "He doesn't move anyone, everyone thinks him ridiculous. No one can read more than two verses of him. Heavens, I can't!"

The master: "Come, come, Galkiewicz, but that's impossible, absurd. Great poetry, being beautiful, profound, inspired, and great, is bound to move us to the very depths of our souls."

Galkiewicz: "I can't read him. Nobody can."

The master's brow was wet with perspiration. In an attempt to move Galkiewicz he produced from his wallet some photographs of his wife and child, but Galkiewicz's relentless, piercing repetition of *I can't, I can't*, grew, multiplied and became infectious. It started as the murmur here and there; and it turned out that nearly all of us suffered from the same disability as Galkiewicz, and the master found himself threatened with it from all sides. He was in a terrible fix; at any moment he might find himself encompassed by a universal disability, the unrestrained proclamation of which might reach the ears of the headmaster and the inspector; at any moment the whole educational edifice might come tumbling about his ears, engulfing his child in the wreckage; and Galkiewicz obstinately persisted with his *I can't, I can't*. Poor Droopy felt the general inability and helplessness spreading to himself.

"Pylaszczkiewicz!" he exclaimed: "Pylaszczkiewicz, will you please show me, and Galkiewicz, and the rest of us, the beauties of a selected passage. Be quick, for delay is dangerous. We must be able to be moved, because otherwise my child is done for."

Pylaszczkiewicz rose and promptly started declaiming a glorious passage from a great poem, the glorious work of one of the greatest poets.

And Siphon went on declaiming. He had been left totally unaffected by the sudden general helplessness and inability. There was no question of *can't* for him. On the contrary, because of his pure and vigorous principles, he always *could*; and this was due less to his native talents than to the strength of his principles. So he declaimed, with emotion in his voice, meticulous elocution, spiritual fervor, and emphasis. He put into it all the beauty of which he was capable, and the beauty of his recitation multiplied by the beauty of the poem and the greatness of genius and the majesty of art was imperceptibly transformed into a monument of all beauty and all greatness. Moreover, he recited with piety and mystery, inspiration and strength; and he sang the poet's sublime song as the poet's sublime song ought to be sung. Oh, what beauty, what greatness, what genius, what poetry! Fly, wall, finger-nails, roof, blackboard, windows, the threat of impotence were spirited away, wife and child were out of danger, everyone started proclaiming that of course he was fully able to appreciate great poetry, and the only thing that everyone now wanted was that it should stop. At that moment I noticed that my neighbor was smearing my hands with ink—his own were completely smeared with it, and his reason for smearing mine was that his toes were covered by his shoes and socks, and other people's hands are, after all, more or less the same as one's own, so why not? What else was there to do? What could one do with one's legs? Move them; and then what? After a quarter of an hour of this even Galkiewicz groaned that he had had enough, confessed his appreciation and admiration, apologized, and admitted that he *could*.

"So you see, Galkiewicz, there's nothing like school for inculcating a love of art. Which of us would have been capable of admiring the great geniuses if the knowledge that they were great geniuses had not been hammered into our heads at school?"

The audience, however, was presenting some very queer symptoms. Everyone's back was bent beneath the weight of the poet, the bard, the master, his child, and the general torpor. The bare partition walls and the bare school-room desks with their ink-wells offered not a glimmer of distraction; through the window a small area of wall was visible on which someone had written the simple words: 'He's gone.' So there was nothing for it but to busy oneself either with the pedagogic body or one's own body, and that was why those who did not occupy themselves by counting Droopy's hairs or trying to plumb the mystery of his long nails, tried such things as counting their own hair or unscrewing their necks. Myzdral was twisting about, Hopek was grumbling to himself—trying painfully to disarticulate himself, so to speak—some seemed completely immersed in themselves, others had given in to the

fatal device of talking to themselves, others were tearing off their buttons and ruining their clothes—in other words, all round there was arising a jungle of absurd reflexes, a desert of senseless actions. The only one to flourish in the midst of this general aridity was Siphon, who was more and more firmly rooted in his principles. The master, who kept remembering his wife and child, endlessly repeated: “Poet, bard, messianic spirit, the Christ of the nations, the torch of beauty, sacrifice and redemption, hero and symbol.”

The words came in through ears and tormented minds, while faces twitched convulsively, and ceased to be human; fatigued, battered, exhausted, reduced to nullity, they were ready to assume almost any shape—what an exercise for the imagination! And reality, bettered and exhausted too, became a world of dreams—oh! escape into a dream...

I realized that I must get out of this.⁵

Translated by Eric Mosbacher in Witold Gombrowicz, *Ferdydurke* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), pp. 160–174.

⁵ The translator of the text, Eric Mosbacher decided to change several names of the characters of the novel. Thus in his translation Gałkiewicz is replaced with Kotecki, and Myzdral with Bobek. In the current volume the original names as well as the Polish orthography of other names in the text has been restored (with the exception of the nickname Droopy – in Gombrowicz’s text, it is Bładaczka). Moreover, the title of Słowacki’s play *Balladyna* appears in its Polish version (in the translation as *Balladina*).

GEORGE SEFERIS: A GREEK – MAKRIYANNIS

Title: *Ένας Έλληνας - ό Μακρυγιάννης* (A Greek – Makriyannis)

Originally published: As a leaflet in Alexandria, 1943

Language: Greek

The excerpts used are from Γεωργίου Σεφέρη, *Δοκιμές* τ. Α, (Athens: Ίκαρος, 1974), pp. 236–237, 240–241, 257–259, 261–262.

About the author

George (Georgios) Seferis [1900, Smyrna (*Tur.* Izmir, present-day Turkey) – 1971, Athens]: poet, literary critic and diplomat. His father Stelios Seferiadis was a famous lawyer as well as a translator and poet. The family milieu was, thus, very favorable towards the literary ambitions of young Seferis who was already writing his first poems in 1914. However, that same year, the Seferiadis family left for Athens. There, he completed his secondary education in the ‘Model Classic High School.’ In 1918 his family moved to Paris. There, encouraged by his father, he studied law between 1918 and 1924. Seferis experienced the vivid intellectual life of Paris in the inter-war period. His encounter with Paul Valéry’s poetry, *la poésie pure*, surrealism, and his admiration for Jules Laforgue and Guillaume Apollinaire determined the poetic inclinations of his youth. In 1925, he returned to Athens, and a year later, joined the diplomatic service. His first work, *Στροφή* (Turning point), published in 1931, signaled a real turning point for Greek poetry. Seferis was later introduced to the poetry of T. S. Eliot, which had a huge impact on his work. His eagerness to use simple language to transform everyday life into poetry was reinforced by Eliot’s method. The outcome of this impact was the *Μυθιστόρημα* (Novel story) published in 1935. Between 1936 and 1938, Seferis served in Koritsa, (*Alb.* Korçë) in Albania. In 1938, during the **Ioannis Metaxas** regime, he was appointed head of the foreign press department at the press and information ministry. In 1941, in the wake of the German invasion of Greece, he followed the Greek government and fled to Cairo. There, he experienced both the bitter rivalry among Greek politicians and the outbreak of a mutiny in the Greek navy in 1944, which marked the beginning of the Greek civil war. In 1945, he returned to Greece, and between 1948 and 1962, served in the embassies of Ankara, Beirut and London. In 1963, he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature. In 1969, breaking the silence imposed by the junta, which had seized power in April 1967, Seferis made a statement on BBC radio condemning the military regime. In 1971, his funeral in Athens became the occasion for a demonstration against the regime. Apart from his poetry, Seferis gave path-breaking lectures on literary figures. These lectures and essays were published in two volumes under the

title *Δοκιμές* (Essays) in 1974. While Seferis's generation sought to escape everyday misery by traveling, he himself developed the reverse attitude. Since he spent most of his time abroad out of necessity, instead of the misery, he experienced a longing for his native land and its people (encapsulated in the term *Romiosini*—the Greek-Orthodox definition of the nation, originating from the Ottoman categorization of the Greeks as part of the millet of the *Romei* (Tur. *Rum*) (see **Ioannis Psicharis**, *My journey*) which has been brilliantly described in the verse: "Wherever I might go, Greece wounds me." Thus, Seferis became a symbol of the mixed feelings of pride and agony that Greeks experienced due to the political and social turbulences of the twentieth century. His poetry has been very popular internationally, and in many occasions adapted in popular music and films.

Main works: *Στροφή* [Turning point] (1931); *Μυθιστόρημα* [Novel story] (1935); *Τετράδιο γυμνασμάτων* [Notebook of exercises] (1935); *Ημερολόγιο καταστροφώματος Α'* [Logbook I] (1935); *Ποιήματα* [Poems]; (1935), *Ημερολόγιο καταστροφώματος Β'* [Logbook II] (1944); *Κ. Π. Καβάφης – Θ. Σ. Έλιοτ Παράλληλοι* [C.P.Cavafy – T.S.Eliot in parallel] (1946); *Κίχλη* [Thrush] (1947); *Τρεις μέρες στα μοναστήρια της Καππαδοκίας* [Three days in the monasteries of Cappadocia] (1953); *Ημερολόγιο καταστροφώματος Γ'* [Logbook III]; (1955); *Δοκιμές* [Essays] (1974).

Context

The German invasion of Greece and the surrender of the Greek army in April 1941 signaled the beginning of an ordeal for the Greek people. The government found refuge in Cairo, where it resumed the struggle for the liberation of the country. This was a conservative government whose personnel was recruited by the dictatorial regime of **Ioannis Metaxas**. On the other hand, the resistance groups which established the *Έθνικό Άπελευθερωτικό Μέτωπο EAM* (National liberation front) in 1943, representing a large part of the Greek population, were marked by a leftist ideology. Consequently, it was clear that the EAM would not easily consent to the return of the exile government after the end of the war. Negotiations between the two sides did not produce any results, and in April 1944, a mutiny took place, organized by the leftist officers of the Greek navy in Cairo. The mutiny was suppressed, but it constituted the first act of a painful drama which would culminate in Athens in December 1944, when the EAM's military force, *ΕΛΑΣ Έθνικός Λαϊκός Άπελευθερωτικός Στρατός* (National people's liberation army), clashed with British troops and the Greek military units which supported the official government of Georgios Papandreou. This was the first dramatic turn of the Greek civil war, which would end with the defeat of the EAM forces. This defeat would lead to the splitting of post-war Greek society into communist and anti-communist fronts, initiating the incessant harassment of members of the former up until the overthrow of the military junta in 1974.

Seferis's lecture on Makriyannis's memoirs should be read within this political context. Undertaking the responsibility of intellectual leadership, the poet and diplomat felt the need to support and inspire his compatriots by offering them a symbol of struggle, resistance, and national pride derived from the Greek Revolution of 1821 against Ottoman authority. At the same time, in order to demonstrate the significance of the 'people,' he sought to advocate the uninterrupted existence of the 'soul of the nation' in the acts and writings of what he considered a typical popular figure. General Ioannis Makriyannis (1797–1864) was one of the leading revolutionary figures who wished to convey his own version of the events of the Revolution and its aftermath. His memoirs first appeared in 1904 in the newspaper *Ἀκρόπολις* (Akropolis), where excerpts were published in installments. In many ways, this manuscript depicted the ideological cleavages of an entire period. The general discontent prevailing in the newly-born Greek state was more evident in the accounts written by revolutionary figures who had been later ousted by the regime of the Bavarian prince Otto, possessor of the Greek throne. These sentiments were mirrored in a most dramatic way in the autobiographical notes of the revolutionaries published in those years. Many tried to present their own version of the events that led to independence, at the same time bemoaning the loss of democratic ideals, which were, at the beginning, part and parcel of their vision of national fulfillment.

The young poets and novelists known as the generation of the 1930s sought to define *ἑλληνικότητα* (Hellenicity) in a way that would clearly depart from the visions of the 'Great Idea' prevailing in Greek national ideology before 1922 (see **Giorgos Theotokas**, *Free spirit*). They were inspired by Makriyannis's account, since his 'Memoirs' were already widely known by then. By 1941, Giorgos Theotokas had already written a relevant article, which was overshadowed by Seferis's account two years later. However, both shared the view that the 'Memoirs' not only constituted a source of national self-awareness, but could also be read as a literary work mainly due to the original demotic language the author had employed.

Seferis's lecture of 1943 had a programmatic character. The central value Seferis pointed out in the 'Memoirs' was the coexistence of a personal style with a collective voice, due to the fact that the author was actually almost illiterate. What Seferis considers Makriyannis's personal style was the latter's difficulty in expressing himself on paper and the imaginative way he constructed his text. This guaranteed Makriyannis's originality and, in Seferis's mind, abided by the aesthetic demands of Anglo-Saxon modernism. At the same time, this tracing of a personal style distinguished Seferis's ac-

count from old-fashioned folklore studies. However, through Makriyannis, Seferis sought mainly to establish a temporal continuity of the nation. According to the poet, Makriyannis's oral form of writing carried the "heritage of the soul of the nation ... the popular tradition of the race." Makriyannis's difficult writing, according to the poet, depicted "the voice of many people," and consequently described "the conscience of a whole nation," proving that the Greeks always found themselves not in an individual 'me' but in a collective 'us.' Moreover, it depicted genuine heroism, a notion so much needed in the rotten world that Seferis and his generation had experienced.

Seferis found also the opportunity to talk about education. He considered it highly fortunate that Makriyannis did not learn more than what was necessary to express himself. He subsequently attacked the semi-educated scholars who, in his view, had systematically sought to destroy people's culture over the hundred years of the Greek state's existence. Seferis thus introduced the tension between education and culture. He employed the term *pedia* for culture derived from the Anglo-Saxon intellectual tradition where culture comprises all aspects of human activity, as opposed to the German notion of *Kultur* which dominated Greek intellectual life. Thus he contended that education (*ekpedefsi*) should respect and promote popular values instead of eliminating them. With this lecture Seferis hoped to establish a link between what he considered to be the two representatives of "original" Greek culture: Makriyannis and the generation of the 1930s. He thought that it was the task of his own generation to explore and represent the "popular awareness," the primeval cultural heritage embedded in the life of the ordinary folk. This awareness was nurtured by the evocation of memories of an ancient past through folk songs and traditions, and could only be distorted by official education. The fundamental enemy was petit-bourgeois mass-culture which promoted ignorance and material happiness, as well as an educational system that only maintained official ideology.

Seferis's conceptualization of Makriyannis has been extensively addressed. For modernist critics such as Takis Kayalis and Nasos Vagenas, Seferis's turn to popular figures such as Makriyannis did not contradict his modernist standpoint. On the contrary, it represented its strongest expression. Examples from European modernism, such as *Ulysses*, in which James Joyce sought to incorporate Irish traditional elements, and the *Cantos*, in which Ezra Pound tried to appropriate popular culture, were employed in order to support this view. On the other hand, critics such as Vasilis Lambropoulos and Dimitris Jiovas emphasized Seferis's dilemma between tradition and modernism. According to these authors, in his appreciation of Makriyannis or

other figures originating in folk culture (such as the naive painter Theofilos), Seferis presented a “populist” or “national” face. This, they argued, was an attempt to compensate for the western cultural orientation he had adopted up to that point, and constituted an ethnocentric ‘turn,’ since it stressed the specific character of Hellenic identity.

The debate between at least two ideological camps in Greece today takes place on these grounds. On the one hand, there are those who support the notion of *ελληνικότητα* of the generation of the 1930s, and carry on an ideological war both against a neo-Orthodox definition that conceives ‘Hellenicity’ through Orthodoxy as well as against post-modern criticism. On the other hand, there are those who consider the notion of ‘Hellenicity’ of the 1930s as an ethnocentric one not only in terms of claiming specificity, but also in terms of a nationalistic predilection which relies on the assumption of the superiority of the “Hellenic race.”

VK

A Greek – Makriyannis

Reading and writing is one of man’s noblest exercises and loftiest desires. Education is the governor of life. And because these principles are true, we must not forget that there is good education—the one that liberates and helps a person to become complete according to himself—and bad education—the one which perverts and desiccates and is an industry which produces the pseudo-educated and the *nouveaux riche* of learning who possess the same counterfeit nobility as the *nouveaux riche* of money. If Makriyannis had learnt to read and write in those days, I fear he would have had to forsake himself, because education was in the hands of, in the words of the poet, the “triumphant of empty speech,” something of which there is still no lack. I do not commend Makriyannis for not learning to read and write, but I praise our most merciful God for not giving him the means to learn, because, had he gone to a teacher, we would perhaps have the bulk of ‘The Memoirs’ many times over in a language full of bell-clanging and chord-plucking; we would perhaps have more information on the history of those times, we would perhaps have a Soutsos¹ of literature, but this inexhaustible source of life, which is Makriyannis’s book, that is something we would not have. And it would be

¹ Alexandros Soutsos (1803–1868): novelist, poet and playwright. A member of an elite among the Greek-Orthodox community of Constantinople, known as the Phanariots, later on moved to the newly founded Greek state to make careers as bureaucrats.

a great shame because in the way in which Makriyannis reveals himself we can clearly see that even though he was illiterate, he was by no means a mountain-dwelling, uncultivated barbarian. He was exactly the opposite: he was one of the most cultivated spirits of Hellenism. And the learning, the culture denoted by Makriyannis is not something which is separate or exclusively his own; it is the common property, the spiritual wealth of a race, handed down for centuries and millennia, from generation to generation, from sensibility to sensibility; persecuted and always alive, ignored and always present—it is the common property of the great popular tradition of the Nation. It is precisely the substance of this culture, this shaped energy, which created the human beings and the people which decided to live free or die in '21. That is why our popular tradition is so important. [...]

He is like the unknown poets of popular songs: he “makes” the song, and it is revealing when he gives us the opportunity to see up close how the much scorned demotic sensibility has a feel for and a love of the works of ancient art.

“I had two wonderful statues,” he also notes, “a woman and a young prince, intact—you could see their veins they were so perfect. When they sacked Poros, some soldiers had taken them and were to sell them in Argos to some Europeans; they were asking for one thousand *talara* ... I took the soldiers aside and spoke to them: ‘Even if they give you ten thousand *talara*, don’t allow for these statues to leave our homeland. These are what we fought for.’” (II 303)².

You understand. This isn’t Lord Byron, or a scholar or an archaeologist talking; this is the son of Roumeli shepherds, his body covered in wounds. “These are what we fought for.” Fifteen academies trimmed in gold are not worth the words of this man. For it is only in such sentiments that the education of the Nation can take root and blossom; in true feelings and not in abstract notions of the beauty of our ancient ancestors or in dried up hearts which are cataleptic with fear of the vulgar crowd.

“From the graves of our slain,” sang Solomos. His idea was true. The Greek revolution had come out of the marrow of the bones of the living Greeks. And that is why it succeeded, and that is why it did not cease but continued throughout the nineteenth century, and that is why its realization has yet to end. The war of our homeland today—it is not an exaggeration to say—is a continuation of the revolution of '21. For we must not forget: each

² Seferis quotes from the first publication of the ‘Memoirs’, edited in 1907 with an introduction by the historian Ioannis Vlachogiannis.

time our race turns towards the people, asks to be illuminated by the people, is re-educated by the people, it continues the tradition which triumphantly entered the nation's conscience with the Greek revolution. That struggle was a social, polemic and political event. Of this latter aspect, the most ignored, it is important to have proof such as that left to us by Makriyannis. Historical events don't stop at the chronological landmarks we see in the pamphlets of history. [...]

The cause of the Greek revolution and the devastation of the tyrants is formulated by Makriyannis in a word he puts in the mouth of an enemy, just as Aeschylus has the enemies talk about the disaster at Salamina³. "We will be lost because we have committed an injustice." If we really wish to understand ancient Greeks, we must always explore the soul of our people. These words were spoken in 1821. Makriyannis keeps them in his memory and writes them down years later, in around 1829, after he accumulated all the experience of that terrifying struggle. I can see him thinking about them in times of hardship. They lie behind every one of his actions, every one of his maxims. They lie behind the following conversation he has with the French admiral De Rigny⁴, when he is preparing to fight at Myloi:

"As I was fixing the positions at Myloi, Dernys came to see me. He says:

"What are you doing there? Those positions are weak; how will you fight Braimi⁵ there?"

I say to him:

"The positions are weak and so are we. But the God which protects us is strong, and we will prove our good fortune at these weak positions. And if we are few before Braimi's crowd, we have one way of consoling ourselves; and that is that fortune has willed for us Greeks to always be few. That from the beginning to the end, from older times to the present, all the wild beasts have fought to devour us but they cannot. They eat some of us but the leavening remains. And the few decide to die. And when they make this decision, it is rarely that they will lose and very often that they will win. Such is the posi-

³ Seferis refers to the tragedy 'Persians' the most significant anti-war drama written by Aeschylus and performed in 472 in Athens. The plot refers to the devastating defeat of the Persian navy in the hands of the Athenians and their allies.

⁴ Henri de Rigny (1782–1835): the commander of the French squadron at the Battle of Navarino (1827) which ended up with the defeat of the Ottoman-Egyptian fleet in the hands of the British, the French and the Russian naval forces and paved the way for the proclamation of Greek independence.

⁵ Ibrahim Pasha (1789–1848): the son of Mehmed Ali of Egypt. Upon the invitation of Sultan Mahmud II, he led the Egyptian army against the Greek rebels in 1825.

tion in which we are here today. And we will see how the weak fare against the strong.”

‘Très bien,’ said the admiral and departed.” (B’ 169-171).

That is the faith and security Makriyannis gives us.

The second reason I believe Makriyannis is our most important prose writer is because I consider him a great teacher of our language. With the exception of Solomos’s fragmented *Γυναίκα της Ζάκυνθος* (Woman from Zante), I don’t know of another text in Modern Greek letters which teaches us as much as Makriyannis’s text. [...]

This is what I had to say about Makriyannis, the illiterate wayfarer of a great life, who with such effort records on paper the things seen by his conscience. The sure messenger of our long and uninterrupted popular tradition, which, precisely because he keeps it so deeply rooted inside himself, enables him to tell us in the voice of many people, and not only of one, what we ourselves are and how we are. How his anger, his pain and his tragedy are not his own individual affairs but yours and mine and all of ours; affairs in which all of us together, both dead and living, are jointly liable and responsible. He comes forth to whisper to us that our beauties and ornaments and possessions, which we thought valuable, are now gone, grown old and worn and turned into debris, and serve no other purpose but to weigh us down, just like the tragic and desperate Phaedra⁶.

Makriyannis whispers this to intellectual people, at any rate.

From the eve of the last war, the intellectual craftsmen of Europe—I am referring to indicative works—are clearly conscious of living in a spoiled world. This consciousness brought about extremely violent intellectual revolutions, which appeared as early as the first peacetime years.

Translated by Mary Kitroeff

⁶ A figure of ancient Greek mythology. Though married to Theseus, Phaedra fell in love with Hippolytus, Theseus’ son. When he rejected her love, Phaedra claimed that Hippolytus had raped her. As a result, Theseus killed his son and Phaedra committed suicide. The myth provided the plot for *Hippolytus*, a tragedy written by Euripides and staged in Athens in 428 BC.

HOVSEP VARTANIAN: THE CONSTITUTIONAL TRUTHS

Title: *Sahmanatragan jshmardutinner* (The constitutional truths)

Originally published: Constantinople, Dbaran Hovhannu Muhendisian, 1863

Language: Armenian

The excerpts used are from the original, pp.1, 3, 6, 7, 9–13, 16, 20, 22–24, 39–45.

About the author

Hovsep Vartanian (Vartan Pasha) [1816, Istanbul–1879, Istanbul]: Ottoman statesman, journalist, author and translator of Armenian Catholic origin. He received his elementary education at the Kumkapı Bezcian School in Istanbul. In 1827 he was sent to the Mekhitarist Monastery of Vienna to continue his education. After returning to Istanbul in 1836, he started to teach at the Hasköy Nersesian School. In 1837 he entered the Navy as a translator, and in time, advanced to become the head translator. In 1856 he was appointed a member of the *Encümen-i Daniş* (Ottoman Academy of Sciences). He was given the title of Pasha around 1858. In 1860 he quit his military office and pursued a civil career. In 1868 or 1869 he was appointed as a member of the *Divan-ı Ahkam-ı Adliye* (Council of Judicial Ordinances). Vartanian was also actively involved in the affairs of the Armenian Catholic community. He was a member of ‘Administrative Board of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate’ in 1851, and was among the founders of the *Hamazkyats* (National unity) Association established in 1846, which, among other things, organized conferences on social and political issues, delivered by prominent intellectuals of the time. As for his journalistic activities, in 1852 he began to publish the *Mecmua-i havadis* (Journal of events), a publication printed in Turkish written with the Armenian alphabet. The journal proved to be popular, and after a few years, took the format of a newspaper, appearing regularly until 1877. After this newspaper was closed down, Vartan Pasha worked, till his death in 1879, as the leading writer of *Tercüman-ı efkâr* (Interpreter of opinions), also published in Turkish using the Armenian script. His novel *Akabi hikayesi* (The story of Akabi) was the earliest example of this genre in the Ottoman Empire. The novel opened a new path in Turkish literature, and was republished in the Latin alphabet in Istanbul in 1991. Vartanian is, thus, recently acknowledged to be among the founders of modern Turkish fiction.

Main works: *Akabi hikayesi* [The story of Akabi] (1851); *Boşboğaz bir adem* [A garrulous man] (1852); *Tarih-i Napolyon Bonapart* [The history of Napoléon Bona-

parte] (v. 1–3 1855, v. 4–5, 1856); *Telgraf risalesi* [A treatise on the telegraph] (1857); *Mecmua-i kitaat-ı tevarih* [Compilation of military annals] (date unknown); *Yelekdragan herakir* [The electric telegram] (1857); *Sahmanatragan jshpardutinner* [The constitutional truths] (1863); *Şark muharebesi hikayesi* [The story of the eastern war] (v.1 1878, v. 2 1879).

Context

In Europe, the nineteenth century was an era of constitutionalism, and the Ottoman Empire was not an exception. The late 1850s saw the emergence of a movement, generally described as the ‘Young Ottomans,’ which demanded a constitution and a representative Parliament. Thanks to the diffusion of liberal ideas throughout the Empire, a group of people, mainly constituted by intellectuals, asked for a more democratic and participatory way of government as a reaction to the centralizing policies of the Tanzimat.

Similar tendencies existed within the Armenian community of the Empire. In a sense, the community had its own ‘young’ radicals. Throughout the eighteenth century, patriarchal and communal affairs had largely been administered by the clergy and a group of people known as the *amiras*, who were mostly either powerful bankers, who occasionally lent money to the state, or high-ranking bureaucrats who had direct connections with the Palace, such as the director of the gunpowder mills or the chief architect. These people largely financed the social activities and institutions of the Armenian community, and, in cooperation with the clergy, controlled communal affairs in an almost autonomous fashion.

As for the Patriarchs, although the level of their power changed depending on the circumstances, they were accepted as the sole leaders of the community. Their authority on clerical issues and appointments was absolute. However, their authority was not limited to religious issues. The state recognized them as the exclusive representatives of the Armenian community and as mediators in all social and political matters between the state and the community. They were even responsible for collecting the taxes that the state demanded from their community. In Istanbul they were authorized to have a court in which they could hear cases apart from those related to public law.

Against this ‘alliance’ of the *amiras* and the Patriarchs, by the early nineteenth century, a coalition composed of the artisans (*esnaf*), small merchants and newly emerging intellectuals with Western style education started to demand a more accountable administration and to have a say in communal issues. For them, the most essential prerequisite of all these demands was a

constitution, that is, a document determining all principles of administration of the community. Although this group of people increased their authority by having some seats in various commissions of the Patriarchate in the first half of the nineteenth century, the *Islahat Fermanı* (Reform Decree) of 1856 provided them a solid legal base on which the demands of the constitution could be founded, since it stipulated the implementation of new administrative regulations for the internal matters of every community (*millet*). Each community was to prepare its own precept and present it to the Porte for approval. In accordance with this, the Armenians formed a committee in November 1856. The draft prepared by this committee was sent to the Porte in 1857, but was rejected on the grounds that it provided too much autonomy to the Armenian community. After some deliberation, the Porte endorsed an altered copy in March 1863, and the document, which was called the 'constitution' by the Armenians and 'regulations' by the state, was legally affirmed. Thus, the Armenian Orthodox community had a document regulating its internal affairs, while it did not have any authority over the Catholic or Protestant Armenian communities.

The text was quite detailed and comprehensive in comparison to those of the other communities. A very detailed bureaucratic structure, the Patriarch being its supreme but accountable head, was defined. There was to be a 'General Assembly' in Istanbul consisting of 120 civil members elected by the Armenian people and 20 clerics elected by the clergy. Elected by this assembly, the duties of a 'Religious Board' and a 'Civil Board' were described. The latter was responsible for the social and economic matters of the community. A similar structure with religious and civil boards was also established for provincial towns, thus entailing a sizable bureaucratic network. However, the implementation of these regulations and the collection of taxes required an able executive apparatus, and neither the Patriarchate nor any other Armenian institution had such a capacity. Compounded by the unwillingness of the Porte for the implementation of the new regulations, the constitution became ineffective within a short time, although never being officially annulled.

One of the important deficiencies, criticized by Vartan Pasha and others, was the injustice in the allocation of the deputies in the 'General Assembly.' The Anatolian Armenians constituted the overwhelming majority of the community and faced many serious problems such as poverty, double and arbitrary taxation, and assaults and cruelties by Kurdish and other Muslim tribes. There are various and conflicting figures on the population of the provincial Armenians, though none is entirely dependable. Vartan Pasha speaks

of two and a half million. According to the estimate of the Armenian Patriarchate, there were three million Ottoman Armenians in the whole country. If Vartan Pasha's figure is correct, it means that more than eighty percent of Armenians were living outside of Istanbul. Nevertheless, less than fifteen percent of the seats were given to them, in contrast to the democratic representative claims of the constitution.

Vartan Pasha's 'The constitutional truths' was written in such a context and published in the year the constitution was endorsed. He seems to have espoused the constitution, although he was a member of the Armenian Catholic community, on whom the document had no jurisdiction. He uses the pronoun 'we' to denote the entire Armenian population regardless of confession. Therefore, it can be said that he ignored the denominational differences and considered the Armenians of the Empire as one nation. His general assessment was that it was too early to have a constitution because the general level of education among the Armenians was not sufficient for its implementation. But he conceded that since it had been established already, everybody would have to recognize, obey and protect the constitution.

In the book he first deals with some general theoretical questions such as the nature of the constitution, the conditions of its emergence, the rights of man and so on. Later, he focuses on more specific issues related to the situation of the Ottoman Armenians and their constitution. When, at the beginning of his book, he argues that a constitution is nothing but the restriction of unlimited government, he draws upon the literal meaning of *sahmantrutium*, 'constitution' in Armenian, which means 'to draw borderlines.' For him, a constitution regulates the mutual rights and obligations of a government and a people.

Vartan Pasha's understanding of liberty and human rights is a blend of ideas derived from Rousseau and the British liberals such as Bentham, John S. Mill, and Herbert Spencer. In fact, for its time, the first seven chapters of 'The constitutional truths' can be regarded as a competent piece of analysis on political theory. Vartan Pasha's views on liberty and the rights of man seem to have been ahead of his time, particularly in the context of the Ottoman Empire. His remarks on religious rights are especially impressive, given that conversion was one of the most critically debated issues of the time. Although the 'Reform Decree' of 1856 officially recognized the freedom of religion, the Ottoman statesmen were very concerned about conversions to other religions from among the Muslim community, since, in their mind, the ideological and actual power of the state was proportional to the size of the Islamic population. On the other hand, the European states were urging the Ottoman state not only to allow free conversion, but also to provide security

for actual and potential converts. While conversion became an international problem at this time, it was also an intra-communal issue of dispute for the Armenians. Similar to the Ottoman state, the Armenian Apostolic (National Orthodox) Church was worried about its members converting to Catholicism or Protestantism. The Church even demanded that the state should have prohibited such conversions. At the end, the state, willingly or unwillingly, recognized the Catholics as a separate *millet* in 1830, and similarly, the Protestant *millet* was recognized in 1850. In no other *millet* did this split trigger such enormous friction as in the case of the Armenian community. It was partly due to the intervention of foreign powers, and partly due to the pressure of important families who had been converted (especially to Catholicism) that the new *millets* were recognized. Adherence to Catholicism involved the acceptance of the supreme authority of the Pope and the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon of 451 A.D., which had occasioned the departing of the Armenians, the Assyrians and the Copts from the official dogma of Constantinople, and their depiction thereafter as 'monophysites.' Also, and more importantly, Catholicism demanded the use of Latin as the liturgical language. In such an atmosphere, Vartan Pasha's approach was quite liberal since he argued that conversion was a natural right, independent of any state's will or imposition. Rather than prohibiting it, constitutional states should provide appropriate circumstances for conversion and equal treatment for all members of recognized religions. One can surmise that, since Vartan Pasha was himself a Catholic, his denominational origins must have informed his views about religious freedom.

Vartan Pasha regarded the *Tanzimat* reforms as positive changes that would increase the liberty of the individual by eliminating all intermediaries between the state and its subjects, since he saw all non-Muslim peoples as the slaves of their communal leaders. For him, these reforms also gave the opportunity to the community to improve its system of education. The increasing level of education in the community also strengthened the demands of freedom and participation. All these paved the way for the constitution.

We do not have much information about the kind of reactions Vartan Pasha and his work elicited, due to the general scarcity of primary sources in Turkey concerning the social and intellectual life of nineteenth-century Ottoman Armenians. No doubt, the most important reason of this scarcity is that their annihilation at the beginning of the twentieth century inevitably brought about a cultural devastation that broke the intellectual continuity with previous periods. However, we can roughly trace the consequences of the constitution after 1863. First of all, one can say that it could not meet the

expectation of improving the general situation of the Ottoman Armenian community. There were many reasons for this, such as the lack of executive power and financial resources, the injustice of the electoral method, and the overgrown and corrupt bureaucracy, dovetailed to the insincerity and interventionism of the government. As a matter of fact, the constitution and the 'National Assembly' were twice suspended by the state, once between 1866 and 1869 and once between 1891 and 1908. The second instance coincided with the most severe years of Sultan Abdülhamid's reign for the Armenians. Although the constitution could not be practically implemented, one cannot say that it did not have any effect. For example, the first Ottoman constitution in 1876 did refer to the Armenian constitution of 1863, since the drafting commission included Armenian members who had also participated in the preparation of the Armenian constitution. As for today, this constitution is still a reference point for the Armenian diaspora communities. Although they are not organized entirely around this document, their churches are directed according to its related articles. Moreover, in Turkey today, though there have been some changes, the elections of the Patriarchs are still conducted on the basis of the 1863 constitution.

OK

The constitutional truths

The birth of the Constitution

National changes have their own logical consequences.

If the power of monarchical governments had not been used in extreme the constitution would have not been born. Till now the world has not witnessed a monarchical regime that governs for a long time and does not degenerate; and the natural successor of a degenerated monarchy is a constitution. [...] It is nothing but the restriction of an unlimited rule. [...]

If monarchical extremism gives birth to a constitution, of course, constitutional extremism also gives birth to monarchy. [...]

Today the regime that is accepted by the enlightened Europe is the restricted, which is to say, the constitutional monarchy. The majority of European states act on the basis of this principle, and there is no reason to doubt that the rest will follow the same path within a certain time.

A constitutional monarchy has the whole appearance of an actual monarchy but its governments are formed on the necessities of democracy. There the king reigns but does not rule; the public rules but does not reign. The monarch contents himself with his formal status and the constitutional bodies

with their tasks. A system that thus connects two opposite points promises to survive long.

In order that the king reigns but does not rule and the public rules but does not reign, it is necessary that the rights and obligations of both sides should be defined and established, which is possible by a constitution.

The establishment of a constitution and its aims

Only those societies that recognize and claim their rights can establish a constitution. [...]

It is unthinkable that a man is born, lives and dies but has no rights. What are the general, absolute and personal rights of people? [...]

When a man is subject to a government the answer of this problem is easy. In such a condition everyone has some obligations to the government, which is the right of the government; and the government has obligations to everyone under its rule, which is the right of people. As it follows from this, the rights and obligations are inseparable. Nevertheless, the rights of societies are not identical with each other. First and foremost, this depends on the style of the government. Even though constitutional governments provide quite a wide range of rights to their subjects, since all constitutional governments are not identical, this bunch of rights is not either, and this has its own reasons. A society has as many rights as obligations. Since not all societies can be naturally and morally mature enough to shoulder many obligations, it is essential that their obligations be determined according to their capacity. Accordingly, their rights will be also a derivative of this capacity. This is one reason why there are various constitutions.

Secondly, although man is born with a wide range of natural rights, in his political condition, because of either weakness or indifference, we see that all his rights are extorted [by tyrannical rulers]. [...] A constitution only tries to redeem the rights of man from the extortioners; but where the resistance is stronger than its ability, a constitution contents itself with less, where the resistance is weaker than its power, a constitution attempts to take more. This is another reason for the variety of constitutions. [...]

Ignoring little differences we can introduce and examine the rights of man that are recognized and accepted in constitutions:

- a) Religious rights or rights related to the church
- b) Political or national rights
- c) Natural or individual (inseparable) rights

Religious rights or rights related to the Church

Man's right or freedom to maintain his religion or select whichever he wants is not a constitutional freedom but a natural right. [...]

There are different constitutional regulations for religious rights. Some accept only one national or dominant religion and recognize exclusively its rule. Some others permit every single religion; but here permission should not be understood as the freedom to change one's religion because it should already be allowed naturally. In constitutional language this permission should be understood as such although a nation has a dominant religion and recognizes its rule, beside it, the constitution recognizes the rights and authority of other religions. These are to be treated equally or with little differences in comparison to the dominant religion. Whatever protection the constitution provides for the dominant religion should also be granted to other permitted religions. [...]

It is especially vital that a constitution regulate all aspects of its relations with the religions it permits or recognizes; otherwise, that constitution will be incomplete and inadequate, which can bring about terrible results. [...]

Political or national sovereignty

Every constitutional system accepts that sovereignty belongs to the nation, not to a king or race or another single individual. Consequently, the ruler of the nation is again the nation itself. [...]

A monarchy necessitates a monarch and subject people. A constitutional regime, on the other hand, cannot have such features. There is neither a monarch nor subjects. The nation both rules and obeys. [...]

Natural or individual rights

These are the bases or source of all other constitutional rights; and whereas only certain people will have other sets of rights the natural rights will be owned by everyone unexceptionally. [...]

I wish there was no limit and condition on the personal rights and everybody could do whatever he wants.

But let's see whether this is possible in the social condition of man? If one proves to me that man can exist without religion and society, I immediately

wish such an unconditional liberty for him. But if it is not so, it naturally follows that under these two conditions man will sacrifice many of his natural rights, and have only as much freedom as they allow. [...]

In this case it is the most beneficial system for man, which demands the least possible sacrifice of freedom and in which this amount of sacrifice is equal for everyone. Needless to say, people are so lucky only in a constitutional or democratic system; but if they cannot use this fortune properly it immediately turns into misery. [...]

The Constitution in the Armenian nation

Is the Armenian nation's present situation appropriate for a constitution? If someone had asked this question to me some time ago the answer would have been no.

But the time for such an opinion has passed. The nation has established and approved a constitution, owned a constituent, nominees and electees, administration and committees. So, everything is set.

Yes, it has been established and approved but its execution is another question. It is one thing to write a constitution but it is something different to carry it out. [...]

Let everybody know that the term constitution does not always denote the same system. There are different constitutions established on different principles, and they do not resemble each other. [...]

[There are] some nations that are not compact and their members do not have permanent relations. Since waiting for the general enlightenment of such a nation would require an endless patience, a progressive fraction of the nation can stand up and invite the rest to join the constitution. [...]

Unfortunately this is also the situation of our nation. [...]

Our nation's conditions were such that the public did not call for the constitution but the constitution called on, and is still calling on, the whole public because the society was not prepared to accept a constitution.

The constitution is itself an indicator of this situation since for whatever internal and external reasons, a few thousand Armenians got one hundred deputies whereas at least two and a half million got only forty, as if some Armenians are different from some other Armenians.¹ [...]

¹ Here Vartan Pasha refers to the inequality between Istanbul Armenians and provincial Armenians.

We, and indeed the whole world with us, say that the rights and obligations are inseparable from each other. If this is so, how can more obligations be demanded from those who have fewer rights? How can we expect that those, who one night have slept as slaves and woke up in the morning as a people with a constitution, show the same progress and responsibility as the youth that received their education in Paris, London, Venice or Constantinople? [...]

One should demand from the public the obligations as much as their present ability allows ... Extreme constitutionalists should be a little bit tolerant of provincial people and not be surprised that Van or Moush have not shown the same progress as them. [...]

I accept the establishment of the constitution but I see that its full implementation is still going to take time. [...]

Let us be aware of our times; those times in which nations and states were islands in human society separated by seas and rocks have passed. Today, everybody's eyes are on everybody else, Europe is inside us and we are inside Europe.

Translated by Ohannes Kılıçdağı

CELADET ALÎ BEDİRXAN: THE KURDISH QUESTION, ITS ORIGINS AND CAUSES

Title: *La Question kurde, ses origines et ses causes* (The Kurdish question, its origins and causes)

Originally published: Under the pen-name “le Docteur Bletch Chirguh,” as a publication of the “Ligue nationale kurde Hoyboun,” Cairo, Imprimerie Paul Barbey, 1930

Language: French

The excerpts used are from the Turkish translation (made by D. Bayrak and S. Canik) provided in Mehmet Bayrak, *Kürdoloji belgeleri* (Ankara: Öz-Ge Yayınları, 1994), pp. 57, 63, 66–68, 84–86, 96.

About the author

Celadet Alî Bedirxan [1893, Istanbul – 1951, Damascus]: intellectual and Kurdish national activist. Son of Emin Alî Bedirxan, who was the leader of the Bedirxanî clan in Istanbul and among the pioneers of Kurdish cultural nationalism in the Ottoman Empire. Celadet Bedirxan received his primary and high school education in Istanbul. During the First World War he served in the Ottoman army and fought on the Caucasus front. In the wake of the war, with the immanent break-up of the Empire, he actively started working for the establishment of the union of various Kurdish tribes in Eastern Anatolia and Northern Mesopotamia. In 1922, at the end of the Turkish Independence War, he was forced to flee to Germany along with his brother Kamuran. Between 1922 and 1925, he studied law in Munich. Later he moved to Cairo (where his father lived as an exile), and then to Lebanon and Syria. In 1927, along with Memduh Selim, a prominent Kurdish intellectual, he played a leading role in the founding of the separatist Kurdish national organization *Xoybûn* (To be one's self), and was elected its first president. The *Xoybûn*'s primary agenda was to establish an independent Kurdish state in Eastern Anatolia, and between 1927 and 1930, the group was responsible for coordinating the most systematic and extensive attack against the Turkish Republic, the Ağrı (Ararat) uprising. Although Celadet Bedirxan was mainly responsible for the political branch of the organization, he nevertheless participated in some military operations conducted against the Turkish Army just before the final suppression of the revolt in 1930. He remained active in the *Xoybûn* till 1932, when, due to fractional and tribal disputes, the entire Bedirxan family severed its ties with the organization. In 1932, with the growing assimilationist measures of the Republic towards its Kurdish populations, he wrote a personal letter to the

Turkish president Mustafa Kemal, explaining the ethnic origins of the Kurds and attempting to justify their right of existence as a separate nation. After leaving the *Xoybûn*, Celadet Bedirxan remained in Damascus and devoted his life to the study of Kurdish history, language and literature. He initiated the publication of two seminal literary and cultural journals, *Hawar* (Invitation) and *Ronahi* (Light). Through his scholarly acumen and intellectual clout, Celadet Bedirxan turned Damascus into a major center of Kurdish culture and politics. His scholarly output and activism have contributed immensely to the shaping of a worldwide awareness on Kurdish language, history and ethnicity.

Main works: *La question kurde, ses origines et ses causes* (1930); *De la question kurde: La loi de déportation et de dispersion des Kurdes* (Under the pen-name Herekol Azîzan, 1934); *Türkiye Reisi Cumhuri Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa Hazretleri'ne açık mektup* [Open letter to His Highness Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the President of the Republic of Turkey] (1978); *Bingehên gramera Kurdmancî* [Fundamentals of Kurdish grammar] (n.d.); with Roger Lescot, *Grammaire kurde* (n.d. [reprinted 1970]).

Context

The earliest Kurdish uprising that carried the manifest agenda of establishing an independent Kurdistan dates back to 1879, when a powerful Sufi leader named Shaikh Ubaydallah, provoked by Armenian nationalist and Nestorian claims in Eastern Anatolia, was able to mobilize a sizeable tribal network against Ottoman forces. But beyond proto-nationalistic articulations of ethnic identity and time-honored tribal and religious affiliations, a modern discourse about Kurdish national identity was initiated by urban Kurdish intellectuals, mainly the sons of prominent families residing in Istanbul, only around the turn of the twentieth century. Founded by the nascent Kurdish intelligentsia, the first Kurdish organizations appeared following the establishment of the Second Constitutional Regime in 1908. Instigated by incipient nationalist sentiments shared among the Young Turk circles, these organizations mainly pursued an agenda of Kurdish cultural nationalism, thus aspiring to compile historical accounts, to collect (and reconstruct) national myths, folk tales, and to conduct research on various dialects of the Kurdish language. By the end of the First World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, new political demands and aspirations were voiced among the Kurdish elite. Kurdish clubs and societies with popular journals and newspapers emerged in Istanbul and in major towns around Anatolia, without possessing, however, a shared and consistent political agenda (some fractions defended the idea of complete independence, while others opted for a Turco-Kurdish alliance). A commonly-pursued program of armed struggle and national sov-

ereignty coalesced among Kurdish nationalist groups only after the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, as hopes for a form of semi-autonomy (voiced recurrently by Mustafa Kemal and the leading figures of the national resistance movement during the independence struggle) dwindled with the categorical rejection of Kurdish ethnicity in the definition of Republican national identity.

A major change that occurred at the onset of the Republican period was that the two hitherto disconnected groups within the Kurdish national opposition, the urban, secular and Westernized intelligentsia, and the grass-roots provincial networks largely configured by tribal and religious allegiances, formed a complex and enduring alliance as they reacted against the centralizing and assimilationist policies of the Kemalist state. Consequently, the freedom-seeking intellectuals and ideologues of the Kurdish movement in the urban centers (for whom the Turkish state was both an enemy and a model) were compelled to reckon with the tribal and feudal realities of the eastern provinces. The provincial opposition, on the other hand, comprising a complex network of clans and religious orders (all highly disillusioned with the strict secularism of the Turkish state and its intrusive centralizing policies) rearticulated its demands through an appropriation of certain tenets of Kurdish nationalist discourse. What ensued was the rise of clandestine organizations, such as the *Azadî* (Freedom) movement founded in Erzurum, which could harness the support of local power groups around the eastern provinces and incite major rebellions that carried overt national aspirations. The Shaikh Said revolt of 1925, which posed a serious threat to the Republican regime in the few months that it lasted, was largely a result of the new mode of nationalist strategizing, although the overall discourse of the insurgency carried strongly religious overtones (the abolition of the Caliphate was a major issue of dissension that provoked the 'jihadist' claims of the insurgents).

Coordinated by the *Xoybûn* organization, the Ağrı uprising (involving a series of intermittent clashes that intensified in 1930 throughout Turkey's eastern provinces) carried by far the most explicit statement of the Kurdish separatist national agenda. With the participation of several tribal chiefs, autonomy was declared in the region, the Kurdish flag was raised in Mount Ararat, and an independent government was briefly formed under the presidency of Biroyê Heskê Têlî (İbrahim Paşa). Under the direction of Celadet Bedirxan, the *Xoybûn* organization maintained strong international links and conducted propaganda activities for popularizing the Kurdish cause on a global scale. They had branches in Syria, Lebanon, Egypt (where they printed their publications) and the United States. They also cooperated, albeit

on a limited scale, with the Armenian revolutionary Dashnak Party, and managed to harness some support in the international arena.

The 'Kurdish Question' was most probably written in Damascus towards the end of 1930, when the Ağrı uprising was largely suppressed by the Turkish army. As a publication of *Xoybûn*, the document was intended to inform the global community about the claims and demands of the Kurdish nationalists, as well as about the particulars of the confrontation in Ağrı. The text must also be regarded as a response to the official Turkish discourse concerning the 'Eastern problem,' in which the uprisings were characterized as the work of unruly and retrograde bandits, reacting against the 'civilizing mission' of the modern and secular Turkish state.

Addressing an international audience, the text begins by providing basic data on Kurdish geography, population, language and literature. This is followed by a lengthy section on Kurdish history, where, for gaining scholarly legitimacy, the author makes extensive use of the works of notable European Orientalists. Here, the ancient origins of the Kurds (with reference to the 'Gutium' people in Ancient Sumer or the Medes in Iran and Eastern Anatolia) are expounded with particular emphasis on their Aryan racial origins, foreshadowing, and perhaps even galvanizing, the desire to demonstrate the Aryan origins of the Turks in the nascent Kemalist History Thesis (**Afet İnan**, *Prolegomena to an outline of Turkish history*). The historical section continues with a discussion of Medieval 'Kurdish kingdoms' (the Ayyubid state, for instance, which Bedirxan chooses to categorize in ethnic terms), and later the period of Ottoman rule. Bedirxan's narrative attributes a primordial sense of national awareness to all Kurdish groups in history, manifested in a persistent drive to fight for freedom, which, for him, characterizes the historical essence of Kurdish existence. Bedirxan locates the historical origins of the Kurdish struggle against Turkish authority in the early nineteenth century, when "the pact" established in the fifteenth century between the state and the semi-autonomous Kurdish tribes was broken with the centralizing measures introduced by the Ottoman authorities—hence the beginning of a series of revolts that became endemic in the region in the century that followed. Bedirxan is also careful to address the "European misconceptions" regarding the issue of Kurdish dissent. He asserts that the rightful Kurdish struggle for existence is often portrayed in the Turkish and European media as the fanatic reactionism of feudal and ignorant masses from the distant provinces. He then provides a detailed account on the political and military activities of the Kurdish groups after the First World War, indicating their somber motives and their positive contribution to the founding of the new Republic. In

the final section of the text, Bedirxan dwells particularly upon the uprisings of the Republican period. He lavishes particular attention on the 1925 Shaikh Said revolt, which he considers to be the beginning of an ongoing war that culminates with the notorious Ağrı episode in the same year. On the Ağrı uprising, he furnishes a rich array of original documentation, including official records and personal letters. He also provides an extensive, village by village list of losses suffered by the Kurdish population during the Turkish offensive in response to the uprisings between 1925 and 1930.

The *Xoybûn* publications had a significant impact in terms of communicating the agenda of the Kurdish activist elite on an international scale. Through such propagandistic endeavors, the group was able to draw the support and sympathy of a number of intellectuals beyond the Kurdish speaking world, especially in Europe. The ‘Kurdish question’ was followed by the publication of another book in 1934, in which Celadet Bedirxan critically addresses the assimilationist measures implemented by the ‘Settlement law’ promulgated by the Republican Parliament in 1932 (stipulating the evacuation of certain zones and the ‘relocation’ of certain populations from other regions to the east). It was from this period onward that, in official parlance, the Kurds were referred to as the “Mountain Turks.”

AE

The Kurdish question, its origins and causes

The Kurdish nation, its homeland Kurdistan, its aspirations, the reasons for its resistance against the sultans and caliphs, and its upheaval against Kemalism and its accomplices are peculiar issues that are largely unknown to the majority of the world public.

The purpose of this work is to provide to the civilized world information on the origins, the history and the future of Kurdistan and the Kurdish nation [...] to refute the denigrations [made against the Kurds], and to reveal the true nature of the Turks. [...]

History

The origin of the Kurds

In earlier times, to describe the Kurds, it sufficed to say that they originated in the Karduk Mountains, home to ten thousand distant hideaways. Modern research, on the other hand, reveals that the Kurdish past extends even beyond that of the Greeks, and that they have lived as settled communities since very distant times.

Long ago, a community called the *Gutium* inhabited the mountains that extended into Syria. The meaning of *Gutium* was 'warrior.' The word is synonymous with *Gardu* or *Kardu*, used in Mesopotamian languages, and with *Karduk*, as encountered in the accounts of Strabon [...]. It could be said that [the *Karduks*] essentially maintained their freedom at the time of the Mesopotamian Empire. [Later], after the fall of Nineveh, they merged with the Medes. [...]

First disputes in the history of Turco-Kurdish relationships

Abiding by the tenets of the established pacts [with the Ottoman state], the Kurds mobilized their own arms, troops and resources in order to join all battles waged by the Turkish sultans. Hundreds of thousands of Kurds died on the Vienna front in order to facilitate the expansion of Turkey in Asia and Europe.

Yet, even the Kurds' sacrifices and their full subordination to the established system were not enough to stop the avarice of the Turks [...]. Soon after, the Turkish sultans devised strategies and fabricated pretexts in order to revoke the privileges given to the Kurds and to annex their lands to the Ottoman Empire. Thus, with deceit, cunning, duplicity, violence and other means, they gradually attained their goals. In 1847, the only remaining Kurdish principedom, which had been able to resist all maneuverings and intrigues, was destroyed, and hence, the entirety of Kurdistan was subjected to Turkish rule [...]. The purpose of this study is not to narrate the history of Kurdish revolts, but to reveal the origins, causes and consequences of the ghoulis incidents that occurred in Turkish Kurdistan under the surveillance of an intolerant regime. The Turks have striven for years to make the world believe that the disturbances and dissent in Kurdish society was engendered by its fanaticism and ignorance, and by the Kurds' overall resistance to efforts of modernization.

Contrary to all Turkish claims, the truth is that although they lived under the same flag with the Turks, the Kurds did not desire to live under Turkish sovereignty, [instead] they yearned after the pleasure, peace and civility of having established self-rule [...]. It is truly unfortunate that the Kurds were blamed for having opposed modernization, while it was in reality the Turks that were the only and the most intractable obstacles to progress in the entirety of the Empire [...]. In the Kurdish provinces of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, one would find not even one school, railroad, hospital, factory or even a meter of decently paved road. One only encountered death, dungeons, mass killings, massacres, rape and pillage. This is the true nature

of the efforts of the Ottoman Empire and the contemporary Republic to civilize Kurdistan. It should be stated openly and without reservation that the Kurds never accepted and will never accept a process of modernization whose aim is assimilation and the extermination of races and whose methods of implementation represent the epitome of cruelty and barbarism. This is why, with all their hearts, the Kurds resist this bloody civilizing process, and refuse to be led by the Turks. The Kurds, whose origins, race, customs, language and even religious beliefs are different from the Turks, impatiently withstand this oppression and eagerly await the day freedom will arrive. [...]

The 1925 Revolt

The Greek army was expelled from the country, and, with the support of the Kurds, extremely advantageous terms of truce were achieved in the Lausanne Treaty. Now, it was [the Kurds'] turn to ask Mustafa Kemal to live up to his offers and promises.

The Kurds reminded the president of the Turkish Republic of the promises he had made, and asked him to start implementing them. But Mustafa Kemal refused to recognize his earlier promises, the Kurdish problem, or even the very existence of the Kurds [...]. The Kurds were [also] abandoned by Europe. With no reason to worry about interventions that would benefit the Kurds, Mustafa Kemal was now entirely free to do what he wanted. The Ankara government decided to eradicate the Kurdish problem.

A plan was devised for this purpose and was implemented from 1924 onward. Firstly, the use of the Kurdish language was prohibited and, later, intellectuals and leaders known for their liberal views and national convictions were sent to exile [...]. It is for this reason that a bloody uprising broke out in 1925 and remains effective as these very lines are being written.

The Turkish government and press did everything in their power to portray this uprising as a reaction of the Kurds against the program of modernization and revival. A fraction of the European press simply appropriated this thesis because of lack of knowledge.

In reality, the reforms introduced by the government barely concerned the Kurds, [and] eliminated the circumstances through which they might have attained independence [...]. The Kurds had a nation and a homeland to care for; they could not allow to be taunted by the fake and contrived civilizing measures of the Europeans and the Turks. [...]

Some might regard the achievement of Kurdish independence as an impossible dream. But one should not forget that there were also those that once

deemed the independence of Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria as impracticable fantasies. Like the Kurds of today, the children of these lands also died for a lofty ideal. This is why those who have already achieved their dreams know very well that for the Kurds as well, the dreams of today are the realities of tomorrow.

Prime Minister İsmet Paşa [İnönü] utters the following words with unforeseen transparency:

“It is only the Turkish nation that can claim rights in this country with reference to ethnicity or race. No one else is entitled to these rights. All doubts about this will be eliminated once the railway reaches the [eastern] border.”¹

These words are too explicit to require any explanation. It is obvious that the measures taken to modernize the country are really designed to assimilate a nation with thousands of years of history, the Kurdish nation.

Here, we proclaim once again: We shall never allow the Turks to realize this project. The war for the existence and independence of Kurds will continue till the Kurdish people have their freedom, or till the death of the last Kurdish soldier.

Translated by Ahmet Ersoy

¹ İsmet Paşa's announcement in the newspaper *Millet* (Nation) on the occasion of the opening of the Sivas railway, 31 August, 1930. no: 1636.

KRSTE PETKOV MISIRKOV: ON MACEDONIAN MATTERS

Title: *За македониките работи* (On Macedonian matters)

Originally published: Sofia, Печатница на „Либералний Клубъ,” 1903

Language: The language Misirkov used is a result of his own efforts to promote a Macedonian literary language. It is basically a combination of several Macedonian dialects. It is not quite identical, though, with the post-1944 Macedonian literary language, although the creators of the latter declared Misirkov's linguistic principles to be their main guideline.

The excerpts used are from Крсте Петков Мисирков, *За македониките работи* (фототипно издание) (Skopje: Кочо рачин, 1953).

About the author

Krste Petkov Misirkov [1874, Postol (present-day Pella in north Greece) – 1926, Sofia]: politician and journalist. After finishing primary education in a Greek school in his own village, he continued his education in Belgrade, Šabac (Serbia) and Sofia. He graduated from the school for teachers in Belgrade and the Seminary in Poltava. While in Serbia, he was a member of the association of Macedonian students in Belgrade named *Vardar* (banned by the Serbian authorities in 1895). Between 1897 and 1902, he completed his studies at the Faculty of History and Philosophy at the University of Saint Petersburg in Russia. There, he was accepted as a member of the ‘Macedonian Association for Science and Literature’ (1902–1905). His first attempt to write in the Macedonian language with an adapted alphabet can be dated to in 1900, and his most famous book, ‘On Macedonian matters,’ was published in Sofia in 1903. In 1905, he became the editor and the only author of the magazine *Vardar* (printed in Odessa), in which he elaborated his views on the national particularity of Macedonians. In 1913 and 1914 he published articles in the magazine *Makedonski glas* (Macedonian voice), issued by the above-mentioned Macedonian association in Saint Petersburg. After the First World War he settled in Bulgaria. Between 1922 and 1925, Misirkov published articles dealing with national and cultural issues as well as with conflicts in the Balkans (especially concerning the triangle of Serbia–Bulgaria–Macedonia), albeit without an explicit separatist agenda. His articles appeared in the periodicals *Ilinden* (St Elijah's day), *Mir* (Peace), *20 Juli* (20 July) and *Pirin*.

Main works: *За македониките работи* [On Macedonian matters] (1903); *Раните ракописи на Крсте П. Мисирков на македонски јазик* [Early manuscripts of Krste P. Misirkov on the Macedonian language] (1998); *Дневник 5 VII – 3 VIII 1913* [Diary 5 July – 3 August 1913] (2008).

Context

Krste Misirkov belonged to the generation of young men who helped define and popularize the 'Macedonian question' through the revolutionary zeal of the organization they had created in 1893, the 'Secret Macedonian-Adrianople Revolutionary Organization,' better known by its later name, the 'Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization' (IMRO). Within a single decade, the organization went a long way from conspiracy to armed resistance, terrorist acts and an (ill-prepared) uprising. The fanatical commitment of its members and the violence associated with its name brought a wider publicity to the whole set of problems connected to Macedonia. This became more accentuated after 1903, when the abortive *Ilinden* uprising provoked reactionary terrorist violence, in which all groups with national and political affiliations took part, turning Macedonia into a notorious domain of fear and despair. IMRO's credo of strict political separatism, based on the idea of patriotic solidarity amongst various nations in Macedonia, became almost the only and dominating voice on Macedonia coming from the Slavic Macedonians themselves. The group's ambiguous attitude towards problems of nationality, identity and religion, informed by socialist and anarchist ideals, did not change the dominant public discourse about Macedonia as a 'mixed salad' of various nations caught together in a vicious circle of tribal violence. Despite all the efforts of IMRO to preserve autonomy of action and authentic self-representation, the dominant international perception of the Macedonian struggle was still that of mutually exterminating irredentisms. Apart from the titular common enemy, the Turks, the first impression that an outsider had of Macedonia was that of Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs killing each other, fighting even against their own fractions. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the image of the murderous Turkish tyrant killing innocent Christians, prevalent amongst the European liberals only a generation earlier, was transformed into a discourse about aggressive nationalists that should better be separated instead of being liberated.

Within this context, the program of Krste Misirkov and the group of Saint Petersburg-based students and scholars was destined to be marginalized, and even become a subject of international contempt, since their aim was to build a separate Macedonian identity based on religious unity, a common, standardized language, as well as a common past and historical mythology. Nevertheless, their ideas were not just an extravagant invention of young academic émigrés. Collections of ethnographic material from Macedonia in the local Slavic dialects and adapted orthographies had already been published in

Sofia and Russia. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, several studies on Slavic philology started, for the first time, to question the dominant assumption about the Macedonian vernacular being a mere dialect of the Bulgarian, or, to a lesser extent, Serbian languages. Misirkov's academic (re)considerations of the 'Macedonian question' basically deprived the ongoing inter-ethnic war (and its combatants) of a logical sense and ultimately of moral justification. The book under discussion was largely ignored when it appeared in Sofia 1903. To make things worse, its distribution was obstructed, and in some cases, copies of it were destroyed. The book presents the first explicit and scholarly elaborated claim about the distinctiveness of the Macedonian Slavs. Misirkov reproaches the revolutionaries for being engaged in uprisings without even defining unitary aims for the national struggle. His point was that fighting for freedom (or autonomy) would have meaning only if the people in whose name the struggle was being pursued were perceived by the revolutionaries to be distinct from the surrounding peoples. If not, he argued, the concept of homeland would lose its meaning, and the division of the territory would become unavoidable.

A strongly pursued agenda in the book is the need to use the Slavic-Macedonian vernacular, that is to say, its central dialects, as a core for an imminent and standard literary language. Misirkov claimed that the progression from a dialect to a literary language was a matter of practical reasoning and decision making, and not of aesthetic objectives. Finally, he also argued for the renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric as an autochthonous church. The idea sounds as if it were taken from a nation-building text-book. Misirkov advises against having three Orthodox religious-educational systems for virtually one and the same people—a situation that would produce different religious, linguistic, and consequently national affiliations (Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian).

After the Second World War and the constitution of the autonomous Socialist Republic of Macedonia within the boundaries of federal Yugoslavia, a newborn Macedonian historiography installed the person of Krste Petkov Misirkov upon a high pedestal. *За македонските работи* is being constantly re-edited and commented on, and is considered to be one of the cornerstones in the emergence of national self-consciousness. The Institute for Macedonian Language and Literature in Skopje bears Misirkov's name.

On Macedonian matters

Many Macedonian readers will be surprised by the appearance of this book. There is a lot to be surprised about. Some would say: why separate from the Bulgarians if we have called ourselves Bulgarians until now, and it is unification, not separation, that gives us strength. Others will claim that full separation will please our enemies, who make every effort to weaken the Balkan Slavs and prepare the ground for the division of Balkan lands amongst themselves. Some would claim that separation will force the Macedonians to renounce their first goal—to fight for political freedom—ruining everything done so far and starting all over again from scratch. Others will argue that I preach some kind of hope for the improvement of the conduct of the Turks towards us and for the institution of European reforms in our fatherland, while allegedly it has been proven that Turkey never wanted, wants or will want reforms in Macedonia and that the states will not be inclined to force Turkey to implement even the smallest reforms. The states, many say, are only playing a diplomatic game using the reforms in order to persuade us to give up our armed struggle against Turkey, something which endangers their own peace. Once we abandon the struggle, they will stop pressuring Turkey for reforms in Macedonia.

These would be the main points of reproach I expect from many of my compatriots. It seems to me that they are wrong and here is why: in my new book there is, indeed, a discussion about separation and unification, but about separation from those from whom we are already separated and with whom we should never be allowed to unite. There is a discussion about unification with those with whom we are morally obliged to unite, and unification with those with whom it is possible for us to unite. If, through separation from the Balkan Slav peoples, we attain the unification of the entire Macedonian Slav population into one whole, we will not get weaker but stronger. So the fulfillment of the ideas developed in this book will only justify the saying that strength lies in unification. Now the question: will our enemies benefit from our separation from the Balkan peoples, and who are those enemies? Now in Bulgaria it is fashionable to claim that the greatest enemies of the Balkan Slavs are the Russians and Austro-Hungarians. These forces arguably want to use the Macedonian question as a means for continuing the struggle between the Serbs and Bulgarians, thus draining the forces of both to such a degree that an intervention in Balkan matters on the part of Russia and Austria-Hungary will become a necessity. Hence the former will occupy Bulgaria and Istanbul, and the latter Serbia and Thessalonica. I will allow myself to dis-

agree with this type of deep political 'visioning.' Maybe Bulgarians are right when they think that Russia cannot exist without Bulgaria, neither politically nor economically, but this is Bulgarian politics, and I have no intention of engaging in politics on Bulgarian terms. I am a Macedonian and the interests of my fatherland lead me to reason as such: The enemies of Macedonia are not Russia and Austria-Hungary, but Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia. Only an energetic fight against these three countries will save our fatherland from annihilation. The fight against the three Balkan states does not contradict our aims, which could be attained by revolution and evolution or by a gradual development of our people in moral and religious terms. The revolution had already happened,¹ and, although it had the most terrible consequences for us, it also yielded some useful results, with which our fighters for national liberation could be satisfied: these are the Mürzsteg reforms which will be implemented according to needs arising in time.² The ideas about the full separation of our people from other Balkan peoples do not contradict the ongoing efforts of our people for gaining freedom, but only continue its efforts on an evolutionary axis. Until now our people were interested only in full political autonomy, allowing uninvited guests, such as the Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs, to interfere ruthlessly in our national interests. Political struggle is followed by the national one, though. Yet, the fight against propaganda in Macedonia is not a step back, but forward, because what we deal with here is a struggle for freedom, a struggle against dark forces that would not let our fatherland view its national interests with its own eyes. The dark forces provide eye-glasses instead, which darken the truth and give it a Bulgarian, Greek or Serb color. It is time to get rid of the cobwebs put over our eyes by national and religious propaganda in Macedonia. [...]

If we are logical, we should admit that the autonomy of Macedonia, for which the revolutionaries were fighting so far, makes sense, since the revolu-

¹ Misirkov refers to the so-called *Ilinden* uprising that broke out in the summer of 1903 and was organized by IMRO. In many ways the whole book engages in a polemic with the ideology and methods of the organization. In both ideological and methodical terms, Misirkov finds the revolutionaries to be wrong, ineffectual and harmful.

² A reform project drawn up to address the deterioration of the living conditions in Macedonia after the 1903 uprising and to diminish the chances for new outbursts of violence in the province. This joint venture of Russian and Austro-Hungarian diplomacy (named after the town in which the emperors and their foreign secretaries met) prescribed numerous administrative improvements and the reorganization of the Ottoman security forces, providing help to the population affected by the revolt. These reforms, starting in February 1904, were implemented through joint participation by the international community.

tionaries perceive qualities and characteristics in our people that are lacking in other Balkan peoples, and define these as our own characteristic features. The comprehension of these specific features regarding the character, traditions, customs, life, myths and language of our people constitutes an important reason to resist the division of our fatherland and plead for its autonomy, because an eventual division will uproot everything that is dear to us and impose many things that are contrary to our popular spirit. Only a separate Macedonian national self-awareness gives us the moral right to fight against the demands of the small Balkan states determined to divide our country, and to fight against the propaganda activity that prepares the ground for such a division. And if it is impossible to gain autonomy, should we indifferently observe the work of propaganda and resist the new trends that oppose it only because that new trend would weaken the strongest propaganda? Not at all, because none of the propaganda sources, however strong they might be, could provide us with what we expect. They are all propagating their own interests, definitely not ours, and nothing special or good for the people can come from them. The liberation from various propaganda fronts will not come on its own, because if today one front seems stronger, tomorrow the other one will get the upper hand at the expense of the former. They will eventually reach their final goal—division, something that even those opposed to national separatism do not desire. Therefore, the latter (national separatism that is) is not inappropriate under the present conditions, and could only yield favorable outcomes instead of damaging us.

National separatism is a unique approach, defined by love for everything belonging to the people and, more importantly, by love for the popular language.

Translated by Nikola Iordanovski

METROPOLITAN ANDRZEJ SZEPTYCKI: ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN VIENNA

Title: Address delivered at the House of Lords in Vienna

Originally published: *Stenographische Protokolle über die Sitzungen des Herrenhauses des Reichsrates 1909 bis 1911 XX. Session (I. bis 15. Sitzung)*, Wien, k.k. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1911, pp. 286–287.

Language: German

The excerpts used are from the original.

About the author

Roman Maria Aleksander Szeptycki (Andrei Sheptytsky) [1865, Pryłbice near Lviv (*Ukr.* Prylbychi, present-day Ukraine) – 1944, Lviv]: clergyman and Ukrainian national leader. Szeptycki was Uniate bishop of Stanisławów (*Ukr.* Ivano-Frankivsk, present-day Ukraine), metropolitan of Halicz (*Ukr.* Halich, present day Ukraine), archbishop of Lviv (*Pol.* Lwów, *Ger.* Lemberg), bishop of Kamieniec Podolski (*Ukr.* Kamianets-Podilskyi, present-day Ukraine), and a central figure of the Uniate community. He was born into an aristocratic Polish Catholic family with Ruthenian roots. His ancestors were already leading the Greek Catholic Church in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth in the seventeenth century. He studied law and theology in Cracow and Breslau (*Pol.* Wrocław, present-day Poland). Szeptycki's early decision to become a monk in a Greek Catholic Basilian Order was unwillingly accepted by his father, who conditioned his agreement on performing his Austrian military service and completing his studies. In 1888 with the acceptance of his family, Roman became a monk and changed his secular names to Andrzej (*Ukr.* Andrei). In 1899 he was nominated bishop of Stanisławów and in 1900 he became metropolitan of the Uniate Church. Szeptycki was devoted to ecumenism and he supported every attempt to reunite the whole Orthodox Church with the Catholic. At the same time, he advocated cultural rights of the Ukrainian population in Galicia. From 1901 until 1914, he was active as a member of the Galician Diet, and from 1903 until 1914, in the 'House of Lords' of the Viennese Parliament and the 'Imperial Ministerial Council.' Szeptycki established the 'Studite Brethren' and introduced the congregation of Redemptorists into Galicia. In 1914, when the Russian army entered Lviv, he was arrested and sent to Kiev, Novgorod and finally to Kursk. Freed in 1917, Szeptycki returned home to support the attempts to create an independent Ukrainian state. At the same time, he was trying to mitigate a Polish–Ukrainian military clash in Eastern Galicia. In the interwar Polish state, Szeptycki supported the

liberal-nationalist Ukrainian political movement. He also launched a campaign against the anti-Orthodox policies of the Polish government in the late 1930s. In 1939 Szeptycki remained in Soviet-occupied Lviv, demanding that all the Uniate clergy stay at their posts. After the outbreak of the German–Soviet war, he officially welcomed the approaching *Wehrmacht* as the honorary head of the ‘Ukrainian National Council’ in Lviv. He supported the creation of the Ukrainian state administration. Nevertheless, Szeptycki soon distanced himself from the Nazi policy and organized an informal network based in Uniate monasteries which saved thousands of Jews from the Holocaust. He also tried, unsuccessfully, to influence Ukrainian partisans to stop the pogroms against Poles in Wolhynia (1943–1944). Szeptycki died in Soviet Lviv in November 1944. Two years later the Uniate Church was officially disbanded in the Soviet Union. The clergy was forced to join the Orthodox Church, while those who resisted would be persecuted.

Main works: *Типикон Студитської Лаври св. Антонія Печерського в Скнилові під Львовом* [Typicon of the Studite monastery of St. Antoni Pechersky in Sknilov near Lviv] (1910); *Твори митрополита Андрея Шептицького. Пастирські послання до духовенства й вірних станиславівської єпархії 1899–1904* [Works of the metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky. Letters to the clergy and believers of the Stanyslaviv eparchy] (1935); *Писма – послання митрополита Андрея* [Letters – proclamations of the metropolitan Andrei] (1961); *Твори Слуги божого митрополита Андрея Шептицького* [Works of metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, servant of God] (1965–1989).

Context

The Ukrainian national movement developed within the borders of two empires that shared the Ukrainian lands since the partition of Poland: Russia and Austria. While the movement was suppressed in Russia and the Ukrainians were denied their national identity, Austria’s liberal nationalities policy allowed the Ukrainians to create national cultural institutions and organizations, foremost in autonomist Galicia. However, Ukrainian national identity often interfered or collided with the Polish national movement.

The ruling cadres of autonomous Galicia were dominated by Polish aristocrats. Most prominent Galician families monopolized important posts and presided over internal politics. The Ukrainian movement developed in opposition to local Polish administration, without any significant support from the Austrian authorities. The movement was sharply divided along ideological lines: the old-Ruthenian party tried to build a political program based on the historical rights of the Ukrainians, whereas the so-called ‘Moskalophiles’ advocated the idea of national unity with Russia. From the late 1860s onward, a new nationalist trend emerged, supported by immigrants from the Russian part of Ukraine. At this time, also the self-description ‘Ukrainian’ started to replace the historical denomination ‘Ruthenian,’ which, however,

remained an official name of the East Slavic ethnic groups of Austria till the dissolution of the Monarchy. In the 1870s, a Ukrainian socialist ('radical') movement was formed, and at the end of the century large parts of the two predominant groups, nationalist and 'radical,' formed a national-democratic party that remained dominant in west-Ukrainian political life till the 1930s. A major weakness of this party was its restrained relations with the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church. In the last decades of the century, however, the party succeeded in attracting the support of the Uniate clergy, and, through it, the Ukrainian Galician peasantry. At the same time, it was the conservative and clerical members of the national-democrats who pledged for compromise with Poles in Galicia.

The new metropolitan Szeptycki was extremely successful in connecting the Uniate Church to the Ukrainian national movement. He demanded high moral standards from the clergy and forced it to pay attention to the social situation of the Ukrainian peasantry. He was also an active participant to the campaigns for establishing a separate Ukrainian university in Lviv. The university project was a part of a broader Ukrainian political program that sought to redefine the balance of power in Galicia either by co-opting the Ukrainian elites to the ruling circle, or, preferably, by dividing the province into separate sections, the Polish and the Ukrainian.

The address delivered by Szeptycki (in his political activities he used the Polish version of his name) in the upper chamber of the Austrian Parliament was a turning point in the successful campaign for establishing a Ukrainian university. He conveyed his opinions during the budget debate of June 1910, skillfully stressing Ukrainian loyalty towards the Habsburg dynasty and the unison of the Ukrainian nation and the Greek Catholic Church. He expressed the Ukrainians' belief in the historical mission of Austria, which was to solve the question of nationalities on the basis of a compromise. He also cautioned his audience against the radicalization of political life in Galicia, which he interpreted as a result of unfulfilled demands of the Ukrainians. Finally, Szeptycki alluded to the danger of Russian pan-Slavic propaganda that could undermine the loyalty of the Ukrainian peasants towards the house of Habsburg. While attempting to gain the support of Austrian ruling circles, Szeptycki also negotiated with Polish political leaders, and finally achieved his goal. The 1913 imperial decree allowed the creation of a Ukrainian university, and in February 1914, a Polish-Ukrainian compromise was achieved. The Polish politicians did not oppose the establishment of the Ukrainian university in Lwów, whereas the Ukrainian representation in the Galician Parliament (till then almost totally absent) was to comprise approximately one

third of the deputies. The significance of the compromise becomes more clear when one considers the turbulent political atmosphere of the early twentieth century, with the radicalization of politics in Galicia, the bloody police interventions during the local electoral campaigns, and the assassinations of Polish and Ukrainian political leaders. The Ukrainian achievements in Galicia provoked a sharp reaction among the Russian official circles with continuing adherence to Russification policies in Ukraine. The Polish–Ukrainian compromise was never to be realized. In 1914 the war began and Galicia was soon to turn into a battlefield, while the main author of the compromise, metropolitan Szeptycki, was arrested by the Russian military and silenced till 1917.

The idea of a Polish–Ukrainian compromise was gradually marginalized during the twentieth century. Already in the autumn of 1918, political conflict in Galicia turned into military clash with Polish irregular forces fighting against units of the ‘Western Ukrainian National Republic’ (Szeptycki was a member of the ‘Ukrainian National Council,’ the political representation of Ukrainian Republic) in Lviv. The final victory of the Poles, followed by the demise of the young Ukrainian statehood augmented the political conflict. The policy of the Polish interwar state towards the Ukraine oscillated between allowing limited autonomy to the assimilation of Ukrainian and Belarusian citizens. While the Polish state prohibited the creation of a Ukrainian university, it also dissolved the Ukrainian high school network in former Galicia. The Ukrainian struggle for independence (1918–1920) was unsuccessful, but many Ukrainians refused to yield to Polish authorities (the boycott of Polish state institutions lasted till 1923), hoping for an intervention by the Western powers. In the early 1930s, when the liberal national-democratic group in Ukrainian politics attempted to forge a deal with the Polish state, the powerful radical nationalist movement took over the leadership till 1945. Andrzej Szeptycki remained a moral authority beyond the Ukrainian community, although his capacity to shape Ukrainian politics was never as strong as in his earlier days as a Uniate metropolitan.

Szeptycki is still considered a moral authority by many modern Ukrainians, especially adherents of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church who regard him as a saint. Together with his heir at the metropolitanate, Yosyf Slipy (1892–1984), he embodies the high moral standards of the persecuted Church which was claimed to represent the nation’s conscience during the tragic years of Stalinism and after. Szeptycki is also praised by Jewish authors, who refer to his attempts at rescuing the Galician Jews from the Holocaust. Polish opinions are divided: Catholic authors comment on his theological opinions and

political achievements with admiration and devotion. His selected writings have been translated into Polish and he is one of the symbols of Polish–Ukrainian reconciliation. At the same time, Polish nationalist historiography criticizes his lenient attitude towards Ukrainian radical nationalism and his initial enthusiasm for the German occupation of the country.

MG

Address delivered at the House of Lords in Vienna

Esteemed House! If I choose to speak in the budget debate, it is not to criticize the present government proposals or express any objections to them in principle. I only wish to draw the attention of the esteemed House to the cultural needs of the Ruthenians, which have hitherto not received sufficient consideration. Although it is a matter of quite fundamental importance that the nations represented in the Imperial Council should be provided with at least the minimum requirements for their cultural development, this is unfortunately not the case with the Ruthenians. It is this fundamental importance that convinces me, in addressing this subject, that I do not speak *pro domo mea*, at least not in the strictest national sense; I am guided by considerations of a quite general nature, mindful of the welfare of the whole Monarchy in which we Ruthenians (Ukrainians) have found tolerance, liberty and protection. Without wishing to censure the government, but not without a sense of justified regret, I have to say that in the state budget estimates on today's agenda we can find no proof that the Government actually and actively seeks to take into account the wishes and aspirations of the Ruthenians.

Although the question of creating an independent university in Lemberg has for years been the object of negotiations and the earnest wishes of the Ruthenian nation, no positive action in this regard has hitherto been taken. But this matter, esteemed Gentlemen, is for many reasons of greater importance than it might at first sight appear. That the establishment of a Ruthenian university in Lemberg is necessary I consider to be proven, and more than proven: it is self-evident. For if the Ruthenians already had a university, the necessity of a second might be doubtful; yet since they have none, to ask whether a Ruthenian university is necessary is like asking whether universities are necessary at all. For if universities are powerful factors in the historical life of a nation, then so must they be for all nations! If universities, by elevating and fostering culture, exert such a powerful influence on the life of human society that in the modern age they have become the greatest and most important centers of cultural and national life, then so must they be for

all societies. If they are necessary, then they are above all and chiefly necessary for those who as yet have none. It must be admitted that a people that numbers three and a half million in Galicia, thus occupying fourth place among the nations of the Empire, and whose cultural development yearly demands large numbers of priests, schoolteachers, civil servants, judges and other academically trained professionals, cannot in the long term do without a university and must be conscious of an urgent need to establish such an institution.

Neither can it be denied that the Ruthenians have a right to a university of their own, especially since this right has been conceded to several much smaller nations in the Empire. And should anyone object that the Ruthenians are not yet ready for autonomous intellectual inquiry at their own university, we would be compelled to dismiss such an argument as historically false, since even in the seventeenth century we had flourishing academies and consequently also high schools. If this argument proved anything at all, the logical inference would be that a young man should not attend school until he has learnt something, nor a sick man visit the doctor until he is well.

Furthermore, any attempt to justify this shortcoming on the grounds of economy rests on an entirely mistaken assumption. For the debate about universities is above all a postulate of culture and learning. We have known for a long time that expending resources on raising the standard of cultural life and learning is not strictly speaking expenditure, but an investment that brings rich rewards. Just as excessive frugality in agriculture or any other business can have disastrous consequences—not only where the expenditure is absolutely essential, but also in cases where it is considered solely in terms of actual tangible gain—so it is too with the cultural life of a nation. We shall make little progress in this matter by forever asking anxiously: is it really absolutely necessary, is there really no other way of avoiding this expenditure? A paradox it may be, but it is nonetheless a pure truth: culture is most necessary in those very places where certain voices dispute that necessity, just as schools are most necessary in those very places where the lack of education is not properly felt. As it is with sunshine and clean, healthy air, so is it too with culture. More light, more air: these are the key words for culture. Nobody thinks to ask whether any place may have a superfluity of sunshine and air, or whether the lungs might manage on a smaller amount of oxygen. Doctors have long since abandoned the tenet that the stale air of closed rooms can be good for the human body. Even if the Ruthenians were not of one mind, as in fact they are, in their demands for enlightenment and their own culture and learning or even if there were those among them who be-

lieved they could live without sun and air, this would provide even stronger proof of our assertion.

The Ruthenians regard it as a blessing of divine providence that they have found in Austria true religious tolerance and an assured freedom to develop their own culture. Their gratitude for this tolerance and freedom is betokened by their loyalty to the anointed person of the beloved Monarch and the entire dynasty. The striving for cultural development, however, requires the support of the state, without whose participation learning is simply incapable, nowadays, of proper development. The lack of state support, or rather the lack of consideration for the cultural needs of a nation, is an injurious wound to the body of that nation, and consequently to the empire of which it is a part. Doubtless the theoretical recognition of the right to culture and the abstract freedom of autonomous development that we enjoy within Austria are not without significance, especially in these times when the majority of the legislative bodies in Europe take, in theory and principle, a very different view—as we have seen in recent weeks. Yet this kind of theoretical recognition is in fact of very little account, and we should not be surprised that people feel dissatisfied and unhappy when they are in every way denied their daily bread; for in these times cultural and, in particular, economic needs are universally felt, imposing themselves with the same categorical imperative as the need for daily bread.

Where these needs are not adequately met, where the bare minimum is wanting, where there is still discussion whether an even smaller piece of bread might not after all suffice, there appear symptoms analogous to hunger—and hunger is always a bad counselor. There have been frequent manifestations of unrest in Galicia—proof enough that the conditions in that country are abnormal. On the one hand we have observed extreme tendencies, albeit of a more acceptable and general nature than elsewhere; on the other, foreign emissaries who have sought to offer the Ruthenian people the hope of a secure future, only outside the confines of the Monarchy, have all too often found a willing audience. These two opposing tendencies have one and the same psychological basis: pessimism, and the loss of the better hope that the lasting satisfaction of all cultural and economic needs can only be attained by legal means, and that this is indeed the only proper way. If an organism is at times afflicted by a fever, or is insufficiently resistant to the bacilli threatening it from without, the remedy for both ailments is the same: better nourishment. That such a cure is no luxury, that the health of the organism will contribute to the well-being of the whole, is self-evident. It is of great consequence to all the nations belonging to the Monarchy that their cultural needs

be satisfied, and of even greater consequence to the Monarchy itself; so that he who speaks out in such matters may be sure that his words will be received as those of a citizen mindful of the welfare of Austria as a whole.

For at a time when many a great and powerful European state bases its existence on a narrow and unjust nationalism, Austria alone, with great effort and sacrifice, is laying the foundations of a monumental edifice of a higher order, seeking support in the counterbalanced interests of different nations, and finding an enduring basis in justice—something that has yet to be accomplished by those who build their foundations on the sand of national egoism. This mighty undertaking is beset by such difficulties that it would perhaps be foolhardy to expect it to yield any tangible results in the near future.

By striving to make the principle of justice between nations a reality, however, we are also working for the victory of a great idea. If that idea does not prevail it is a defeat of all that is noble and good. But as long as law and justice are not empty words, then the future belongs to Austria and her peoples.

The university issue can be illumined from yet another angle, to which I may be permitted, as spiritual leader of Catholic Ruthenians of the Greek Rite in Galicia, to draw the attention of the Government and the esteemed House. For the Austro-Hungarian monarchy is the state within whose borders are to be found the largest of the Eastern Rite communities that still adhere to the resolutions of the Council of Florence and, most importantly, uphold the venerable traditions of early Christianity—namely, the principle of the unity of the Eastern and Western churches. This religious union of the Orient with Rome, of the Catholic faith with the Greek Rite, has become for us Ruthenians something of a national tradition, our national religion. In defense of this idea, which is surely of global importance yet has always met with hostility from national and religious self-interest, our ancestors shed rivers of martyrs' blood, and it is an idea cherished by our people to this day. Thus any initiatives aimed at raising the level of our cultural life will also indirectly further this great and momentous question of religion.

I repeat: for all these reasons, for the cultural and Catholic-religious development of the Ruthenian people under the Habsburg scepter, I consider the establishment of a Ruthenian university in Lemberg to be not merely necessary but eminently important. I therefore urge the Government to direct its attention to this matter with all the goodwill and energy that its importance demands.

Translated by Robert Russell

KÁROLY KÓS: TRANSYLVANIA

Title: *Erdély. Kultúrtörténeti vázlat* (Transylvania. A sketch of cultural history)

Originally published: Kolozsvár – Cluj, Erdélyi Szépműves Céh, 1929

Language: Hungarian

The excerpts used are from the original: *Introduction, Conclusion*, pp. 5, 7, 87–88.

About the author

Károly Kós [original name **Kosch**] [1883, Temesvár (*Rom.* Timișoara, present-day Romania) – 1977, Cluj-Napoca (*Ger.* Klausenburg, *Hun.* Kolozsvár, present-day Romania)]: architect, designer, ethnographer, editor and writer. He was a crucial figure of the Hungarian intelligentsia in Transylvania and a prominent member of East European Art Nouveau. Kós came from an ethnic German family and his father worked as a clerk. He studied architecture in Budapest (1902–1907). He worked simultaneously as an architect and a poet. In 1911–12, he designed the building of the Szekler National Museum in Sepsiszentgyörgy (*Rom.* Sfântu-Gheorghe, present-day Romania). In 1912, he participated in the building of the Art Nouveau-inspired Budapest zoo. After 1918, he chose to stay in Transylvania, and settled in the village Sztána (*Rom.* Stana) near Kolozsvár. He emerged as the leader of the left-wing Transylvanian People's Party (which subsequently merged into the Hungarian Party), and became one of the key figures of Hungarian cultural and political life in Romania, fusing his 'arts and crafts' ideology with a 'Transylvanist' cultural-political discourse. He was the founder of the *Erdélyi Szépműves Céh* (Transylvanian Art Guild), which sought to unite the Hungarian intellectual elite in Romania, and was the editor-in-chief of the periodical *Erdélyi Helikon* (Transylvanian Helicon), the key organ of 'Transylvanism.' In the 1920s, he served as a member of the Romanian Parliament. Throughout the thirties, his historical novels, as well as the unique style of his engravings, played an important role in making Transylvanian cultural life popular among larger social strata of Hungarians across the borders. After 1945, as a public figure of leftist orientation, he was co-opted by the Romanian communist regime. Between 1946 and 1948, he was a prominent figure of the 'Hungarian People's Alliance,' the official representative body of the Hungarian minority in Romania. Afterwards, he became politically marginalized, but—as an iconic figure of Transylvanian Hungarian culture—he continued to retain a certain cultural influence until the very end of his long life.

Main works: *Atila királról ének* [The song of king Attila] (1909); *Régi Kalotaszeg* [Old Kalotaszeg] (1912); *Sztambul* [Istanbul] (1918); *Kiáltó szó* [Crying word] (with Árpád Paál and István Zágoni) (1920); *Erdély. Kultúrtörténeti vázlat* [Transylvania. A sketch of cultural history] (1939); *Kalotaszeg* (1932); *Az országépítő* [The state-builder] (1934); *Budai Nagy Antal* (1937); *Háromkönyv* [Tripartite book] (1969).

Context

In the *fin-de-siècle* cultural-political context, Transylvania's position was highly ambivalent. On the one hand, it was a space of vivid contention between the Romanian and Hungarian nation-building projects; on the other hand, it became economically and culturally rather marginalized and was considered provincial. One of the cultural orientations which tried to turn this symbolic value-system upside down was the 'arts and crafts' movement, which emerged in the wake of similar Western movements and which sought to re-valorize the Transylvanian cultural tradition, drawing inspiration from its pre-modern, folkloristic cultural heritage. Kós was a prominent member of this movement and emerged in the 1910s as an influential ideologue of this new camp, drawing his architectural and poetic inspiration from the culture of Kalotaszeg (*Rom. Călata*), an ethnographical region to the north-west of Kolozsvár. After 1918, however, this entire framework of symbolic geography changed completely, as Transylvania became part of Greater Romania and the hitherto dominant Hungarian community became a minority, in a country marked by a strong trend towards unitary nation-building. The Hungarian elite was profoundly shaken by this development and many of its key representatives opted to settle in Hungary (the most famous case was the emigration of the Calvinist Bishop Sándor Makkai whose choice led to a prolonged debate on minority existence) while other leaders of the Hungarian community chose passive resistance or active irredentism (hoping for the revision of the Peace Treaty of Trianon).

Emerging in this context, the 'Transylvanist' movement sought to reconsider 'Transylvanianness' and came to play a crucial role in reshaping the cultural-political strategy of the Hungarians. As the administrative unification and subsequent centralization of the country was received with discontent even among some of the Romanians of Transylvania, who considered themselves to be socially and culturally more advanced than their counterparts from the Old Kingdom, a regionalist discourse, which could transgress national frameworks and accentuate the common interests and cultural simi-

larity of the Transylvanian nationalities offered new perspectives. Kós became one of the main protagonists of this strategy, drawing on previous discourses of Transylvanian peculiarity elaborated mostly by Saxons throughout the nineteenth century, but also going back to the cultural memory of the early-modern Transylvanian Principality. In Kós' vision, this regionalist ideology was underpinned by a dose of social radicalism. While in Hungary left-wing ideas were completely marginalized after the collapse of the 1919 Soviet Republic, in the context of Hungarian minority politics in Transylvania (as in Czechoslovakia), the leftist and conservative groups were forced to find a *modus vivendi*, integrating various national, social and regionalist demands.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Kós produced a number of works which were meant to strengthen this Hungarian 'Transylvanist' discourse. While not abandoning his interest in the cultural peculiarity of Kalotaszeg, he constructed an alternative narrative, which was meant to forge a symbolic identity encompassing all ethnic communities of Transylvania and stressing the common will of the 'Transylvanian people.' This 'common will' was based on a shared historical / cultural heritage, while implying the preservation of the ethnic particularities of each community and repudiating forceful assimilation. Thus, he contributed to the formation of a regional discourse of identity, which, while never becoming hegemonic, had a lasting impact on the Transylvanian Hungarian intelligentsia and institutions.

The book, *Erdély*, was one of the most important manifestos of 'Transylvanist.' According to the author, the book was meant to be a 'sketch,' not a historical study. It was written for those who considered Transylvania to be their "only homeland." The introduction starts with an assertion of the peculiar character of Transylvania, which Kós derives from the combination of natural factors (the closed nature of the Transylvanian plateau), historical processes and "spiritual forces." These determining factors dissociated him from the 'ahistoric' national characterologies that were becoming increasingly fashionable in the late-1920s. It was, in fact, an attempt to create a 'Transylvanist' collective characterology which was not based on ethnic peculiarities, but on the cultural and historical convergence of different nations living together.

Throughout the book, Kós documents this unity in view of the convergences and mutual influences in the art (especially architectural) history of the region, pointing out that under the often conflict-ridden political history of the coexisting national groups, their cultures were influenced by one another. So much so that their cultural identity cannot be assimilated by their

ethno-national kin outside of Transylvania. Consequently, in the *Conclusion*, Kós pleads for an interethnic solidarity of the Transylvanian nationalities, and a program that would represent the interests of the region as a whole, going against the respective nation-building thrusts of Romania, Hungary and Germany.

This construction contributed to the formation, by the mid-1930s, of a new generation of Hungarian intellectuals, who took the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural framework of Transylvania seriously. However, the radicalization of Hungarian and Romanian nationalism in the late-1930s, the 'return' of Northern Transylvania and the Szekler counties to Hungary as a result of the Second Vienna Award (30 August 1940) and the subsequent clashes aggravated the ethnic conflict in the region and undermined the hopes for a 'Transylvanist' solution. As matter of fact, even Kós was tempted by an ideological position, accepting ethnic cleansing. The influence of the 'Transylvanist' ideology nevertheless contributed to the emergence of a *modus vivendi* after 1945, when the emerging Romanian Stalinist regime accommodated a sort of Hungarian 'national Communism' in the Hungarian-inhabited parts of Transylvania. This arrangement was gradually abandoned by the Romanian communist leadership from the mid-1950s onwards, driving a significant part of the Hungarian intelligentsia into opposition. While Kós himself did not challenge the regime openly, his patriarchal figure represented an alternative cultural reference in the period of increasing national homogenization.

BT

Transylvania. A sketch of cultural history

Introduction

From a geographical point of view, Transylvania is a single unit, being a plateau sharply enclosed by mountain ranges and surrounded on the West by the Great Hungarian Plains, on the North by the Bukovina Basin stretching into the Dniester Valley, on the North-East and the East by the lowlands of Moldova and on the South-East and the South by the Wallachian flatland (the deep lowlands of the Lower Danube)—that is, surrounded on all sides by low and extensive plains. The interior part of the Transylvanian basin, containing only the lower valleys of the Maros,¹ Szamos² and Küküllő³ rivers besides

¹ Rom. Mureş.

² Rom. Someş.

the Mezőség⁴ is on average 300–400 meters above sea level, and most of the additional arable lands lie at an average height of 500 meters. In contrast, the average elevation of the Hungarian plains and the Wallachian lowlands is only 100 meters above sea level, and the river valleys of Moldova and Bukovina do not often exceed an altitude of 200 meters above sea level either.

This enclosed and elevated position of Transylvania predestines the land to be a homogeneous unit economically as well.

As for history, it proves that Transylvania is a threshold between Eastern and Western Europe through which every cultural current flowing from the West to the East or from the East to the West has willingly or unwillingly stumbled, and in their stumble they were bound to leave something of behind. From times immemorial, this land has been the melting pot of peoples and faiths, races and cultures, a land in which the terrified remnants of the defeated party from a conflict in one of Europe's ever blood-thirsty realms would seek shelter. They would be sure to arrive in the area between the Királyhágó⁵ and the Eastern Carpathians, this wondrous citadel of mighty forests and hidden, remote dales. And if during subsequent times a lucky chance or a new calamity should cause any of these peoples to depart from this land, there would still remain something of them here.

Despite all human intents, these innate and unalterable features of Transylvania predestine the cultural individuality of the peoples of this land and their dissimilarity from every surrounding culture. [...]

Peroration

A thousand years is a long time, even for peoples and cultures. In a thousand years Transylvania has witnessed the wonderful miracle of three peoples and three cultures living their lives alongside and amongst each other in such a way that each of them preserves—because they *can* preserve—their distinct individuality, while at the same time assuming a common character that makes them different from all the alien yet related peoples and cultures surrounding them. This is how in Kalotaszeg, the Orthodox church in Byzantine style can evolve into a church whose closest kin are the Gothic Hungarian Calvinist churches of Kalotaszeg. The wayside rounded manor of a Ro-

³ *Rom.* Târnava.

⁴ *Rom.* Câmpia Transilvaniei.

⁵ *Rom.* Piatra Craiului, a mountain pass traditionally considered the border of Transylvania.

manian nobleman from Vidra is surely more closely related to the Barcsay family mansion, built in a stone-walled enclosure with bastions, than to the fortified donjons, the 'kulas'⁶ of Wallachia. It takes an expert's eye to notice in the houses of the Szeklers of the Erdőmellék⁷ the subtle but characteristic traits that differentiate them from the houses of the Saxons along the Olt River or in the Barcaság.⁸

The cathedrals of Gyulafehérvár⁹ and Kolozsvár, the castle of Vajdahunyad,¹⁰ the Martinuzzi Castle in Alvinc¹¹ are merely the works of the medieval Romanesque and Gothic styles or of the Italian Renaissance. All they have to do with Transylvania is that they happened to be built there, but they could have been anywhere in the world. But the charming Baroque mansions of Háromszék¹² and along the Maros River which were built or rebuilt in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the manor-house of the Romanian owners of the goldmine in Verespatak,¹³ the majority of the Hungarian or Romanian parish churches, the Bethlen Castle in Rákos¹⁴ or even the Catherine Bastion in Brassó¹⁵ and the ancient belfry of Segesvár¹⁶ are all unmistakable and specifically the creations of the Transylvanian psyche.

Now if we examine and compare Transylvania's relics of art simultaneously, we cannot help being surprised and frankly convinced by the kinship constantly and consistently increasing in time between the cultural products of peoples so vastly different from each other in race, origins and culture.

... A thousand years is a long time, even for peoples and cultures, but over these thousand years, none of the peoples and cultures in the land of Transylvania were able to or indeed wanted to refashion the others in its own likeness. From time to time, outside forces did make such an attempt with huge sacrifices but with slight results and without ultimate success. By contrast, it has been an unconscious, constant and never completely remittent aspiration

⁶ Kula (*Rom.* cula) fortified dwellings (from *Tur.* kule) in the Balkans.

⁷ *Rom.* Depresiunea Baraolt, geographical region in Szeklerland, in Kovászna (Covasna) County.

⁸ *Rom.* Țără Bârsei; *Ger.* Burzenland; the area around the city of Brassó (*Rom.* Braşov; *Ger.* Kronstadt).

⁹ *Rom.* Alba Iulia; *Ger.* Weissenburg.

¹⁰ *Rom.* Hunedoara; *Ger.* Eisenmarkt.

¹¹ *Rom.* Vinţul de jos.

¹² *Rom.* Trei Scaune.

¹³ *Rom.* Roşia Montana; *Ger.* Rotseifen.

¹⁴ Alsórákos (*Rom.* Racoş, *Ger.* Unter-Krebsdorf), village in Brassó (Braşov) County.

¹⁵ *Rom.* Braşov; *Ger.* Kronstadt.

¹⁶ *Rom.* Sighişoara; *Ger.* Schaessburg.

of the three co-existing cultures to assume such common features that render them typically Transylvanian despite their differences, while preserving their own racial characteristics. The Transylvanian Hungarians are not the same as those in Hungary, nor are the Királyföld¹⁷ Saxons like the Germans of Germany or the Transylvanian Romanians like those in the Old Kingdom; they differ physically, but they are certainly different mentally as well. And if the Romanians remained Romanian, the Saxons remained Saxon and the Hungarians and the Szeklers, Hungarian, despite their differences, they and all their cultural manifestations are still characterized by a community that is determined, besides the irreversible and eternal natural conditions, by their shared lot and their joint struggles with life. This manifest common feature is the specific Transylvanian psyche that has never been understood, and indeed could not have been understood, by any kinsman of the Transylvanian peoples living outside the boundaries of Transylvania.

What path the peoples and the culture of Transylvania will take in the future depends chiefly on the Transylvanian peoples themselves. According to the testimony of history, Transylvania has belonged to those people who have identified themselves with this land, this destiny and this psyche, and it shall continue to belong to those who identify themselves with it. The fate of Transylvania has been the most felicitous, its culture has flourished in the richest and fullest manner at the times when its peoples faced and accepted the distinct Transylvanian fate with a united will and enriched it with their distinct Transylvanian intellect. [...]

But whichever people have let Transylvania fall anytime, such peoples and their culture have fallen here in the past and shall irretrievably fall in the future. [...]

Translated by Dávid Oláh

¹⁷ *Ger.* Königsboden, historical region in Southern Transylvania, once inhabited by Saxons holding collective privileges from the king of Hungary (hence the name—"land of the king").

ROMUL BOILĂ: STUDY ON THE REORGANIZATION OF THE UNIFIED ROMANIAN STATE

Title: *Studiu asupra reorganizării statului român întregit* (Study on the reorganization of the unified Romanian state)

Originally Published: Cluj, Tip. Națională, 1931

Language: Romanian.

The excerpts used are from the original, pp. 5–11.

About the author

Romul Boilă [1881, Târnavă-Mică (*Hun.* Tirnáva, present-day Romania) – 1946, Sighet]: lawyer and political theorist. His father was a village priest. He studied law in Cluj (*Hun.* Kolozsvár, *Ger.* Klausenburg) and Budapest. Between 1918 and 1920, Boilă was a member of the ‘Ruling Council,’ a political committee organized to facilitate the integration of Transylvania into Romania. He was the head of the ‘Communication and Food Department.’ Boilă was also a prominent member of the National Peasant Party, one of the main political parties of interwar Romania. Representing this party, he was elected a deputy, senator and eventually, between 1928 and 1929, the vice-president of the Senate. A respected authority on legal issues, Boilă participated in the ‘Council of Legislative Reform,’ instituted by the National Peasant Party government in 1930. After the communists took over in 1945, he was arrested and sent to prison. Boilă’s constitutional project did not have any practical effects during the interwar period or during communism. However, his ideas of federalism and regionalism were invoked during the 1990s in debates on devolution and decentralization, particularly in Transylvania and the Banat.

Main works: *Dreptul de alegător* [The right of suffrage] (1905); *Dreptul constituțional român* [Romanian constitutional law] (1920); *Anteproiect de constituție* [Preliminary constitutional project] (1921); *Studiu asupra reorganizării statului român reîntregit* [Study on the reorganization of the unified Romanian state] (1931); *Memoriu* [Memoir] (1934).

Context

On 2 December 1918, a day after the union of Transylvania with Romania was proclaimed by the Great National Assembly, an executive committee was nominated: The ‘Ruling Council.’ The main purpose of this committee

was to supervise Transylvania's political and administrative integration into Romania. Fifteen members were elected to the Council: Iuliu Maniu (President), Romul Boilă, Octavian Goga, Vasile Goldiș, Vasile Lucaciu, Alexandru Vaida-Voevod, Aurel Vlad were among them. These were the representatives of Romanians in Transylvania, both Greek-Orthodox and Greek-Catholic, who had directly participated in political debates on national issues of the final years of the Habsburg Monarchy and, finally, orchestrated the union of Transylvania with Romania.

The functions of the 'Ruling Council' resided in both legislative and executive fields. The 'Ruling Council' held the legislative power, but civil courts that were independent from it exercised the judicial power. Boilă, as the main legal expert, was one of the architects of the legal doctrine of the 'Ruling Council.' He recalled this experience in *Organizația de stat* (The state organization), a book published in 1927. The 'Ruling Council' had been set up as an institution of regional government. It functioned until 1920, preparing the introduction of Romanian laws in the territories of Transylvania, the Banat, Crișana and Maramureș. The measures adopted by the 'Ruling Council' reflected the intentions of Romanians from these territories to unite with Romania as well as their explicit concern with their individuality and historical achievements. Through various laws, the 'Ruling Council' expressed its predilection for decentralization and regional specificity in the enlarged Romanian state.

After 1918, however, in order to create a homogeneous national identity, a rigorous program of centralization was professed by the Romanian political elite in Bucharest. These policies aimed at eradicating regional differences. Boilă's 'Study' represents a clear answer to the rigid centralization measures organized by governments in Bucharest. It also shows the political frustration felt by the Romanian elite in Transylvania, who did not manage—as hoped—to remove the Hungarian and German elite from key economic and political positions, but had to accept the role of the "messengers of centralization" representing the central government in Bucharest. By 1930, it had become clear that the battle against excessive centralization was lost, and the Romanian elite of Transylvania had to comply with the new situation.

Boilă proposed a constitutional project that rejected the idea of centralization. Nevertheless, rhetorically the regionalist argument was based on the imperative of national unification. Greater Romania, argued Boilă, did not manage to construct a viable constitutional regime. He thus directly criticized the constitution of 1923 for having introduced only centralist laws. These laws did not achieve the expected result: the complete spiritual transforma-

tion of the Romanian nation. On the contrary, they antagonized the Romanians. Accordingly, a new constitutional edifice was needed if the Romanian state was to prosper. The new constitution acknowledged a central government, but the government's powers were to be supplemented by the introduction of a diet and regional government for each historical province: Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania. Together these political institutions would constitute a National Assembly (*Representanța Națională*), the supreme political organism of the Romanian nation in the new state.

In addition to the technical arguments concerning decentralization, Boilă also presented cultural arguments. Using Germany and Yugoslavia as examples, he suggested that Transylvanians' embitterment with the central government in Bucharest could be eliminated, if a new power relationship between these provinces and the administrative centre of Romania was provided. Only decentralization, claimed Boilă, could effectively value the human and symbolic resources offered by Transylvania. Yet, it was essential that the new cultural politics would not create a cleavage between regional and central powers. Regionalism and regional traditions, emphasized Boilă, were important for the definition of the Romanian nation as a whole. By treasuring the regional spiritual values, the spiritual strengths of the nation were enhanced and perpetuated. Preserving the autonomy of the historical regions in Romania was a "natural necessity," and decentralization the process through which such a necessity was implemented.

After 1989, the regionalist tradition was revived in Romania, particularly in Transylvania and the Banat, and not only by the Romanian majority. Claiming regional identity, Romanian and Hungarian intellectuals and politicians alike suggested that allegedly distinct cultural customs and mentalities survived in these regions, notwithstanding their inclusion in the unified Romanian state after 1918. Although Boilă's arguments played an important role in shaping some of the political and cultural debates in post-communist Romania about regionalism and de-centralization, none of them led to a political federalization of Romania, as some Transylvanian regionalists had hoped.

MT

Study on the reorganization of the unified Romanian state

Today, almost 13 years after the unification of the Romanian principalities with the Old Kingdom, we are forced to admit that the unified Romanian state has not yet achieved the proper and satisfactory state organization, although meanwhile, a unitary constitution has been produced.

The reasons for this unfortunate state are numerous. Let us review some of the most important ones. Those that led the state almost exclusively during the 13 years did not think seriously for one minute to introduce a healthy constitutional and parliamentary life. This would have meant, in fact, the loss of their political supremacy. Therefore, for years after the unification, for different alleged reasons, they postponed the making of a constitution, which would have had the role to set the organization of the unified Romanian state on a new and solid basis. Afterwards, declared by the Constituency a Parliament that was elected and set up by means of fraud and falsehood—i.e. quite contrary to the fundamental principles of the constitution—in the year 1923, a constitution was issued, but except for the liberal party, no other Romanian party had contributed to its writing. Such a constitution was far from being appropriate for the realities and exigency of the new state of facts. Neither did the makers of it consider it sacrosanct and healing in the light of the great interests of the unified State, but they asked that it should be obeyed and vowed on it only when someone touched some stipulations meant to vouchsafe certain matters of political and material interest for the governing party. [...]

But what shows the falsity of state life in relation to the constitution is the total absence of accountability of those that act politically or economically on behalf of the nation. Who could punish those who are responsible, if the making and lasting of the most important factor of punishment and control of the Parliament is completely and fundamentally compromised?

In such circumstances, the prestige of the state authority has fallen to an alarming level. The state is led by dilettantes, who—unembarrassed and unscrupulous—change the organic laws in opposition with the clear provisions of the constitution. Thirteen years have not been enough to create an economic situation that could safeguard us from the great economic crises in the world, although everyone emphasizes that we used to be one of the richest countries in the world. [...] Our educational system at all levels is subjected every year to some radical changes. Fundamental principles are approached with unheard ease. The economic crisis is due to a great degree, besides the repercussions of the global phenomena, to the political instability, the unreliability of justice, the labile and sometimes non-existent control, then to the faulty management of the badly informed and inappropriately qualified bodies. There is no part of the state life that shows a different icon but that of terrifying chaos. [...]

The governing system of the unified Romanian state, inaugurated since the unification, has produced in other fields, too, deviations that especially for those in the unified provinces, meant disappointment and horrible disillusion.

For instance, this happened in the first place as concerns the citizens' liberties. Not once in the 13 years since the unification, we have seen the sons of the provinces, who used to be persecuted by the gendarmes of the oppressors in the past, being persecuted by the Romanian gendarmes today, limited in their freedom of movement and offended in their individual freedom. Let us remember the elections, which a greedy government turned into a civil war, stained by the blood of brothers chained in neo-slavery!

The practitioners of a new exclusive and ferocious regionalism, serving personal and group interests, accuse all those in the united provinces of regionalist mentality. But who will not see the ostracism of our "brothers" in the "freed" provinces, and their exclusion from the natural and rightful validation that all the citizens of our unified state should have? Instead of strengthening the much craved for spiritual unification, the brothers and fighters for the same ideal are mutually suspicious of and inimical toward each other. The thirteen years since the unification have passed without having reached our goal: the completion of the spiritual unity of the Romanian nation.

All these findings and the painful state in which we are entitle us to believe that the blame for the great disaster which reaches to the foundations of the most significant goods of our existence as a state and nation is on the system of government which has been established since the unification. A centralizing system, which now and then raises its hideous head, destroys everything by lack of organization and prevents the success of the country and the happiness of its sons in the provinces who have run so enthusiastically to the bosom of the motherland.

Let us muster up courage to stand up against the wave. We must change the entire state organization radically. After experiencing what we have had, we cannot trust any method, however nicely presented and however loudly announced by those interested. We are getting close to the twelfth hour, when we will be unable to save anything. The unified Romanian state is only entitled to exist if it lies, without any reserves, on the fundament of a stately life, penetrated by the purest constitutionalism. It must be seen and examined what kind of organization best guarantees the maintenance and development of goods that are the basis of a constitutional life. Before anything else, we must develop the possibility to establish responsibilities so that we can apply punishments to all those who work in the name of the state, regardless of the position that they hold. We must find a state mechanism to serve the mentality, the degree of general, judicial, social and economic culture of the different fractions of our nation, guaranteeing citizens' liberties and providing thus

for a healthy emulation within our people. The new organization will have to resolve the issue of minorities and religion. Class struggle must be prevented and attenuated by the appropriate agreements, and especially it must be guaranteed that the maximum degree of social justice will be achieved.

The new organization must gather the maximum energies and be a stimulant of progress in all fields. Having absolute trust in the power of life of the Romanian nation, thus setting out for the common goal, which is the institution of a solid and honest constitutional state organization, we will be able to achieve, in time, the most important guarantee of the future: the spiritual unity of the nation.

The present project, researching and analyzing all the possibilities, is trying to provide an adequate solution without touching the unity and indivisibility of the unified Romanian state—through its new organization, with the widest possible application of the principle of decentralization.

First, the project renounces the idea of centralized and exclusionist governance and legislation, in which it sees the cause of evil. The central Parliament, the only body of legislation, was compromised not only through the illegal and false manner of setting up since the unification, but also through its methods of work. Instead of the central Parliament the ‘State Council’ has been introduced which, by its composition, and wide attributions that it is granted, and the small number of members, will be in the situation to carry out with authority all that the Parliament lacking in all these has not been able to accomplish. This central body made up of the most distinguished sons of the nation will be the constant and inexhaustible expression of the unity and indivisibility of the state.

A central government has been set up, whose members will be recruited from the members of the ‘State Council’ after the parliamentary principle, but the administration, or rather the execution of the common issues, except for the foreign affairs and the army, has been assigned as the attribution of the decentralized organization.

The biggest innovation is the introduction of the diet and the provincial government, which, through their operation—organized in three provinces: Wallachia, Moldavia and Transylvania—will be called upon to be the depositories of the constitutional State life together with all the advantages they will have, such as: genuine, not falsified parliamentary life, dominance of public liberties, accountability of public servants at all levels, honest public life, lawfulness, security and consistence of justice. [...]

This is not the right place to debate with the adversaries of decentralization. This does not stop us from briefly emphasizing some objections that

have been raised and will be raised again by those who combat wide scale decentralization in our country. Their supreme argument is that *decentralization* prevents the course of spiritual unification and the technical consolidation of the new Romanian state. We could readily answer simply this: *centralization* so far has prevented it and failed. But we will refer to more relevant examples in the life of peoples. The past and present provide us with enough material. [...]

We do not ask for political separation, but a more emphatic decentralization, a genuine decentralization. But decentralization serves the national idea and stops irredentist actions also. In the decentralized state the centrifugal currents and the extremist fractions lose their supporters and weaken. They are channeled in the decentralized life of the bodies of local provinces. If in the economic world, through the system of incentives, the production capacity will be strengthened, in the life of villages a wider and more direct participation of the citizens strengthens their solidarity, develops the citizens' dignity and love for the common country.

Decentralization means, on the one hand, an important saving, and on the other hand, it is a stimulant for the validity of all initiatives and forces working for the development of the national economy. Decentralization wipes out jealousy and regional antagonism, replacing them with noble emulation and the affirmation of an increasingly fecund solidarity. Decentralization replaces the reckless mass currents in their aiming for mystical goals, with positive work for the achievement of concrete and practical goals. Decentralization does not destroy parties, but annihilates their tendency to gain political hegemony that is so damaging to the general interests. And finally decentralization strengthens the prestige and the power of the head of state, who will intervene more frequently and of course with more success in the management of state affairs.

Translated by Maria Kovács

JOSEF PFITZNER: SUDETEN GERMAN HISTORY

Title: *Sudetendeutsche Geschichte* (Sudeten German history)

Originally published: Reichenberg (Cz. Liberec), Sudetendeutscher Verlag Franz Kraus, 1935

Language: German

The excerpts used are from *Sudetendeutsche Geschichte* (Reichenberg: Sudetendeutscher Verlag Franz Kraus, 1937), pp. 9–20.

About the author

Josef Pfitzner [1901 Petersburg near Zuckmantel (Cz. Petrovice near Zlaté Hory, Austrian Silesia) – 1945, Prague]: Bohemian German historian and politician. He was born into a shoemaker's family. After attending grammar school in Opava (*Ger.* Troppau), he studied history at Prague's German university. Here, in 1930, he became Professor of East European history. Among his interests were the regional, administrative and economic history of Silesia and the history of German settlement in Bohemia and Eastern Europe. He was fluent in Czech and during his studies he attended the lectures of **Josef Pekař**, who later regularly reviewed his works. During the 1920s, he was appreciated by prominent Czech politicians and historians, including **Tomáš G. Masaryk** and Josef Šusta, as an influential Sudeten German historian actively supporting the Czechoslovak Republic and striving to create a conciliatory Czech-German historical consciousness. In the mid 1930s, however, he joined the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* of Konrad Henlein, and, as his book *Sudetendeutsche Einheitsbewegung* proves, he aspired to become its leading ideologist and theorist. In keeping with the party line, he turned towards Nazism in the late 1930s, rising to the rank of *SA Standartenführer* in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. In 1939–1945, he was Deputy Mayor of Prague and was instrumental in preparing the deportations of Prague Jews to concentration camps, controlling the Czech city administration and introducing various Germanization policies in the capital city. As the epitome of the pro-Nazi Sudeten German, he was tried and sentenced to death by an 'extraordinary peoples' tribunal' in September 1945, and was executed in what became the last public execution on Bohemian territory.

Main works: *Besiedlung-, Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte des Breslauer Bistumes*, vol. I [The history of the settlement, constitution, and administration of the Breslau bishopric] (1926); *Das Erwachen der Sudetendeutschen im Spiegel ihres Schrifttums bis zum Jahre 1848* [The Sudeten German awakening in their lit-

erature up to 1848] (1926); *Grossfürst Witold von Litauen als Staatsmann* [Vytautas the Great of Lithuania as a statesman] (1930); *Bakuninstudien* [Studies on Bakunin] (1932); *Sudetendeutsche Geschichte* [Sudeten German history] (1935); *Sudetendeutsche Einheitsbewegung. Werden und Erfüllung* [The Sudeten German unification movement. Its making and fulfilment] (1937); *Das Sudetendeutschtum* [Sudeten Germandom] (1938); *Kaiser Karl IV.* [Emperor Charles IV] (1938); *Das tausend-jährige Prag* [Prague of a thousand years] (1940); *Reise in ein "Paradies." Erlebtes und Erkanntes aus der Sowjetunion* [Journey to 'Paradise': Experiences and learnings from the Soviet Union] (1942); *Die Hauptstadt Prag ehrt das Andenken Reinhard Heydrichs* [Prague, the capital city, honors the memory of Reinhard Heydrich] (1943); *Die tschechische Jugend und der Reichsgedanke* [Czech youth and the idea of the Reich] (1944).

Context

In October 1918, the majority of the German inhabitants of the Bohemian Lands refused to recognize the newly declared Czechoslovak Republic as legitimate, and with reference to the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination they instead voted to join the Republic of Austria. At the Peace Conference in Versailles, however, the Czechoslovak representatives asserted their claims to the entire territory of what they viewed as the historical lands of the Bohemian Crown. Consequently, the Czechoslovak army suppressed German anti-Czechoslovak demonstrations in the borderlands. The new Republic did not succeed in winning the active support of its German and Hungarian inhabitants, who were declared minorities separate from the 'political nation of Czechoslovaks.' Nevertheless, especially in the prosperous 1920s, the 'activist' parties among this population (the agrarians, Christian socialists, and social democrats), in favor of pragmatic collaboration with Czechs and Slovaks, grew quite strong. The Great Depression of 1929, however, had a strong impact especially in the German-inhabited borderlands and radicalized politics in these regions. In 1933, Konrad Henlein founded the *Sudetendeutsche Heimatsfront* (Sudeten German Homeland Front), the core of which was formed by members of German nationalist parties that had been banned in the same year due to their openly irredentist activities. In 1935, the party was renamed the *Sudetendeutsche Partei* and came out with a program advocating full German autonomy in Czechoslovakia. The party was strongly supported by the Third Reich. In the 1935 elections, it won two thirds of all the German votes and was the second strongest political party in the National Assembly. In the following years, it served as a fifth column for Nazi Germany in Czechoslovakia and after the 1938 Munich Agreement, it was incorporated into the Nazi Party.

The identity of the Germans in the Bohemian Lands was transformed considerably in the interwar period from 'Bohemian Germans' to 'Sudeten Germans.' At the beginning of the century, the majority of Germans living in Bohemian Lands expressed their identity in regional terms such as *Deutschböhmen*, *Deutschnährer* or *Deutschschlesier*, that implied their allegiance to Germany, Austria or both, though there were few ties between the various individual regional groups. Their becoming Czechoslovak citizens, however, united these various groups into a *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (community of fate), and they adopted a new name, they became 'Sudeten Germans.'

This process was mirrored and also enhanced in the academic sphere, most notably in the human sciences and historical research. There was an important liberal conservative Bohemian German school of historiography in the nineteenth century (Konstantin Höfler, Adolf Bachmann) that offered an alternative interpretation to **František Palacký's** history of Bohemia. They agreed with his idea about the continuous contact and conflict of Czechs and Germans in Bohemia, but they did not share his high regard for 'Slavic democracy,' and they stressed instead the cultural predominance and crucial role of German ethnicity. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Bertold Bretholz made an effort to change the basically confrontational tone of German-Czech historiographical discussions. In his *Geschichte Böhmens und Mährens*, he sought to explain the historical conditions for the peaceful co-existence of Germans and Czechs. He presented his idea about the originally German-Czech character of Bohemia from ancient times. According to his *Urgermanen* theory, large parts of the East Germanic population remained in Bohemia during the time of the Migration Period (between Late Antiquity and Middle Ages). These formed the basis for German population in the country and carried the 'continuity of German settlement' throughout centuries. There was not, however, any evidence (linguistic, archeological, and so forth) in support of this, and the theory was soon criticized not only by Czech, but also by German historians. In 1918, although the majority of German historians in Czechoslovakia still considered themselves to be a part of Austrian historiography, the situation changed rapidly with the creation of Czechoslovakia. At this time, the German University of Prague became the most important center of crucial historical debates, such as that concerning Bretholz's thesis in the 1920s. The primary focus of the German historians, however, turned from the all-German to the Sudeten German perspective. The younger generation of German historians in Prague (Heinz Hirsch, Theodor Mayer, Josef Pfitzner, Heinz Zatschek), influenced by *Volks-*

geschichte, began to concentrate on the history of German settlement in Bohemia, with strong emphasis on the history of the Middle Ages. Increasingly, their academic writings provided a suitable historical narrative supporting Sudeten German identity-building and, at the same time, justifying their recent claims for cultural and political autonomy within Czechoslovakia.

One of the most active in this respect was the ambitious Josef Pfitzner. Already in 1926, he had published a book about the 'Sudeten German awakening' prior to 1848. At the beginning of the 1930s he published several articles in which he called for the writing of a general history of the Sudeten Germans. On 28 October 1934 in Opava, he gave a speech at an official celebration for the anniversary of the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic, where apart from the representatives of German cultural organizations, official representatives of the state were also present. In his lecture 'The Historical Fate of Sudeten Germans and Czechs,' Pfitzner gave his account of the historical development of relationships between both ethnic groups and formulated an 'optimistic vision' of the main features characterizing this relationship. He accordingly challenged Palacký's conception of Czech history and—being one of the few German historians who followed Czech publications on history—he explicitly made references to historians such as Jaroslav Goll, **Josef Pekař**, and Kamil Krofta and their interpretations of Czech history. According to Pfitzner, the "meaning" of Sudeten German history was the transmission of German cultural values to the Czechs. In his view, Sudeten Germans, were to serve as a bridge between past and present. The circumstances in which Pfitzner delivered his lecture compelled him to make politically moderate formulations. It is reasonable therefore to see his lecture as an example of a relatively 'activist' stance of the Sudeten German movement towards the Czechoslovak state. It formulated a basis on which, from their point of view, the coexistence and the 'good neighborhood' of Sudeten Germans and Czechs could have been possible. This interpretation depicts the history of Bohemia as the history of two essential national groups with separate paths of development from the outset. As such, the argument was unacceptable for many Czech and German historians, and definitely at variance with the official idea of the Czechoslovak state. Later, Pfitzner published his lecture as the introduction to his *Sudetendeutsche Geschichte*. In the book, he leans towards Bretholz's theory on the character of the Bohemian Lands as being made up of two tribes (German and Czech) dating back to ancient times.

Even though the Sudeten German identity in interwar Czechoslovakia developed rapidly, many German historians in Czechoslovakia, especially the

‘old liberals’ from the previous generation, did not accept Pfitzner’s ideas, seeing them as too politicized. During the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, Pfitzner’s conception of Sudeten German history, together with similar intellectual endeavors, was overshadowed by the vision of the all-German Third Reich. Thus, Pfitzner’s own writings aroused mistrust and criticism among the Nazi leaders in the Protectorate as well as in the Reich. After the postwar expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia, the books of Pfitzner, as part of the cultural legacy of *Sudetendeutschtum*, became an important unifying aspect of the Sudeten German movement in the Federal Republic of Germany.

MK

Sudeten German history

[...] All of this struggling and effort by the Czech side to clarify the meaning and content of Czech history has admittedly passed almost unnoticed by Sudeten German historians, even though the fate of the Sudeten Germans will also be partly decided by it. [...]

Now the time seems to have come to place Sudeten German history next to Czech history, which it is closely related to, and to reconsider the meaning of Sudeten German history. It was clear to me that for the fruitful formation and interpretation of our own past, the realistic method that **Pekař** had so successfully employed for Czech history would be most suitable. With this view in mind, six main forces and facts easily emerged, which will surely make clear the historical fate of the Sudeten Germans from their immigration to these lands up to the present day and into the future.

The first, essential force and fact of our history has been that the Sudeten Germans are an immediate part of all the German people, but split off into a special sub-branch, and that the German culture of the Sudetenland, which is now coming together from out of the individual branch cultures into one whole Sudeten German culture, is therefore an integral part of all German culture and therefore of Western Europe. In a 1932 article in *Český časopis historický*¹, Pekař responds to this observation with the comment that there was, in his opinion, probably no Czech historian who would deny the “need of the Germans for cultural coexistence with the German people on the other

¹ *Český časopis historický* (The Czech historical review): the main professional historical journal in Bohemia, published between 1895 and 1949 and from 1990 onwards.

side of the border.” And, a few weeks ago, Krofta explained: “It is clear that we cannot seek, or want, to denationalize our German compatriots, nor can we shut our eyes to the reality that they are members of the great German national community, which cannot be without influence on their relationship to the state in which they live.”

The second fundamental factor for Sudeten German history arises from the Sudeten Germans’ being neighbors of the Czech nation, from which stem manifold mutual relations of a spiritual, physical and economic nature. It is precisely in this field that we agree with the Czech interpretation of history, which emphasizes that beneficial things, and not just harmful things, may occasionally come out of it. Third, the unique physical position and distribution of the Germans in the Sudetenland has a fateful effect on their way of life in many areas. Fourth, the Germans, owing to their immediate membership in German and therefore Western culture, in many ways represent the culturally stronger element, yet find themselves numerically in the minority. Fifth, the Sudeten Germans have never formed an independent state, but have always belonged to larger state bodies. Sixth, consciousness of membership in the German cultural community was no small support and force in the development of the Sudeten Germans. These basic facts and forces provided me with the guidelines, when, in 1933, I wrote an outline of the history of the Sudeten Germans. Pekař adopted a critical position on both essays, explaining that they were identical, each showing the middle ground in the argument, a position which was tenable for both camps of scholarship.

Since, however, these main ideas and basic forces of the Czech and Sudeten German historical fate, which stemmed mainly from history but were also tested in the present, had an effect not only in the past but also similarly have an effect through the present and future, we now wish to turn our gaze to the fundamentals of what we ourselves are and to the present and foreseeable future. At the same time, reciprocal Czech–German relations should be in the foreground. As we heard, the fact of being geographic neighbors, which is the decisive fact for peoples as well as for individuals, has been dominant between the Czechs and the Germans. Clearly, being neighbors creates obligations between people and can bind them together; it need not separate them. Being good neighbors leads to a coexistence that can weather all storms. The conditions for the creation of good neighborly relations must be known by each of the neighbors and felt by them, otherwise neither of them will share the greater good of community life. [...] If we apply these convictions, which are drawn from national and individual life, to relations between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechs, then the fact that the Czechs and Sude-

ten Germans have been neighbors for seven hundred years and the fact of the almost thousand years of Czechs' and Germans' being neighbors in general teaches us with forceful clarity that despite the many conflicts, even of a war-like kind, being good neighbors is possible. [...] [A]ncient history teaches us that Sudeten Germandom and Czechdom have possessed enough vitality to preserve their national existence despite all the dangers and troubles. Switching sides came into play only on the linguistic boundary, but was never too dangerous; the essence of the Sudeten Germans and Czechs was left unharmed, yet it has sown bitter animosity between them. Observing this thousand-year struggle must demonstrate to all concerned, and to all whom the formation of good neighborly relations matters, that it is basically pointless, indeed is outright detrimental to the apparent winner, to shift the borders of his own land holdings by force, since he will surely evoke the enmity of his neighbor. If this knowledge, sanctified by historical experience, is accepted, then the argument over the boundary lines of these national land holdings in the state will be solved for ever.

Good neighborliness between Czechs and Germans, if it is to be strengthened from within, entails joy in the achievements of the other, without envy; it entails, in fact, being models to each other, and entails give and take in the highest spheres of human culture. For this very reason, healthy and constructive competition based on good neighborly relations will develop between the two nations, free of any hatred, spirit of expansion, revenge or feelings of inferiority, a spirit that knows only one aim—namely, to create, in the framework of its own nation and nationhood, and on that basis, united by competition with the other nation, many of the highest enlightening values of culture. The President of the Republic has repeatedly stressed the necessity for this peaceful, noble competition, because, as a scholar and statesman, as an educator of his nation, he knows that only honorable spiritual rivalry and struggle produces progress. [...] The Sudeten Germans, however, because of their being closely bound up with all of German culture, still have one duty to the Czechs: the duty of being first-class purveyors of culture. It has been demonstrated again and again that building bridges from the Czechs to the world of German culture and *vice versa* is the 'meaning' and 'mission' of the Sudeten Germans. This service, which the German nation is to perform for the Czech nation, is a noble task. Its essence was also indicated by Krofta who said, "I don't hesitate to add that, while carefully preserving our sovereignty as a nation and state as well as the uniqueness of our spiritual life, we shall always gladly and willingly be enriched by a German culture that has in the past contributed and, God willing, will continue to contribute to the world." [...]

The preconditions for the establishment and maintenance of good neighborly relations have been enumerated here, and the responsible parties of both camps will now, by the arduous education of their nations, strive to surmount the harsh, often unbending reality. The responsible parties among the Sudeten Germans in particular will have to bear in mind from their history that their main tasks do not lie exclusively in the field of politics. Sudeten German history teaches us that quiet cultural work, which produces eternal values, is the most noble task. In the area of politics not all the tasks and therefore not all the fruits fall to the Sudeten Germans, though they could, if they had a state of their own, lay claim to them and would have to strive for them. The Czechs, like the Germans, must consider that the basis of the Czech nation is firmly settled in this state, while the Czechs abroad are of no serious consequence, and, conversely, only a small part of the German nation lives in this state, while the vast majority live outside its borders. This, as well as the ratio of the numbers of people from each nation and the origins of the state, explains why the Sudeten Germans play no independent role, for example, in foreign policy. A wise state leadership will, however, take the Sudeten German situation into consideration when formulating foreign policy to make that position easier, rather than more difficult. [...]

Translated by Derek Paton

RESOLUTION OF THE MUSLIMS OF BANJALUKA

Title: *Rezolucija banjalučkih muslimana* (Resolution of the Muslims of Banjaluka)

Originally published: as a petition distributed in Banjaluka on 12 November 1941

Language: Bosnian

The excerpts used are from Muhamed Hadžijahić, *Muslimanske rezolucije iz 1941. u istoriji naroda Bosne i Hercegovine* (Sarajevo: Zbornik radova, 1973), pp.38–39.

Context

The resolutions issued by Bosnian Muslim political, religious and social elites during the second half of 1941 represent a dramatic peak in the Bosnian Muslim politics of the pre-communist era. These resolutions did not have any substantial impact on what was happening in the *Nezavisna Država Hrvatska* (Independent State of Croatia, hereafter *NDH*). However, with the exception of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, they represented the clearest statements against racial politics and ethnic hatred promoted by any part or political party of the dismembered Kingdom of Yugoslavia in the period between 1941 and 1945 (see **Josip Broz Tito**, *National question in Yugoslavia in the light of the Liberation War*).

The *NDH* was a puppet state of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. It was founded on 10 April 1941 and covered the territories of present-day Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as parts of Serbia. Supported by German and Italian weapons and troops, Ante Pavelić, member of one of the many splinter-groups of the Croatian Party of Rights, introduced a fascist dictatorship. In that, he was bolstered by his party militia called *Ustasha*, who were notorious for their violent methods. He outlawed the leading Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska Seljačka Stranka*, *HSS*), and placed the most popular Croatian politician and national leader, Vlatko Maček, under house arrest for the

duration of the war. Pavelić developed a special national program defined by a mixture of Nazi-fascist racialism and Catholic proselytism. In addition to his extremely radical antisemitic measures, Pavelić's politics targeted the Serbian population of Croatia and Bosnia. He believed that the final solution to the Croatian national question would be achieved only when Serbs were confined to areas east of the rivers Sava and Drina. Especially in 1941, pogroms took place on a daily basis. One of the most gruesome of such acts was the notorious crime in the Orthodox church of Glina (in present-day Croatia), where several hundred Serb men, women and children were locked and burnt alive. Pavelić also established concentration camps where Jews, Serbs, Communists and opponents of his regime were jailed and exterminated. On the other hand, both Pavelić's party and the state considered the Bosnian Muslims a natural part of the Croatian national body, naming them "the flowers of the Croatian people." This, however, was in direct conflict with the missionary zeal of the Catholic Church which wanted Islam in Croatia heavily subdued, if not totally eradicated. Moreover, the *Ustasha* pogroms of Serbs had severe consequences for the traditionally multi-religious society of Bosnia. The Serb peasants defended themselves mostly through guerilla warfare, taking their revenge also on Muslim villages. This created a major Muslim refugee problem in 1942.

The *Udruženje Ilmije* (Association of Islamic scholars) had been established in Sarajevo on 12 March 1912. The aim was to facilitate the work of Muslim religious leaders and establish communication between them and the public. Later on, its main agenda would be the protection of Muslims and Islam. In 1941, the association released the petition in question, which would reach all the cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Banjaluka resolution of 12 November 1941 is important as a statement whereby the Bosnian Muslim elites directly condemned the violence committed by the *Ustashes* against the Serbs. Equally, they condemned the destruction of Jewish properties. They were not, however, as direct in their condemnation of these crimes as they were in the case of the crimes against the Serbs; being aware of the degree of German antisemitism, they might have been concerned about the German response. The document condemned those among the Muslim community who took part in the violence, but it also tried to suppress and counter attempts to hold Muslims responsible for *Ustasha* crimes. It listed various figures regarding the persecution of Muslims and alluded to the insults made against Islam, while also condemning the proselytizing activities of the Catholic Church. It emphatically conveyed the historical paradox of the *Ustasha* crimes, which created a

situation in which the Serbs and Muslims fought against each other. In this, they saw the perfidiousness of the *NDH*'s national and Catholic proselytizing policies.

The documents did not have any positive impact on how Pavelić's regime treated the non-Croats and non-Catholics. To retaliate, the *Ustashes* resorted to more violence. At the beginning of 1942 they confined the majority of the signatories of the Banjaluka resolution to concentration camps in Jasenovac and Stara Gradiška. At the same time, the gravest pogroms against the Serbs took place in the wider region of Banjaluka. On the night of 6 January 1942, the Orthodox Christmas eve, the densely populated Serb village of Drakulić near Banjaluka was totally razed. Around 1000 people were killed by the *Ustashes* led by the Franciscan Friar Miroslav Filipović-Majstorović, who later became one of the commanders of the concentration camp in Jasenovac.

The Banjaluka Resolution remains an exemplary document of solidarity in the midst of mortal ethnic conflicts. On the anniversary of the declaration of the resolution, celebrations take place during which members of the *Udruženje Ilmije* association deliver talks. Its memory, however, is only nurtured by Bosnian Muslims.

ND

Resolution of the Muslims of Banjaluka

Since the inception and establishment of the Independent State of Croatia (*NDH*), we Muslims have been observing with the highest concern how *Ustashes* and other officials with or without influence in government committed the gravest errors and crimes. The most basic rights of man are scrupulously offended. The security of life and property, the freedom of religion and conscience, ceased to be in effect and to be applied to a large segment of the population in these regions. The killings of priests and other leaders without trial or sentence, the shootings and harassment of the population, frequently composed of innocent people, women and even children, the mass expulsion of entire families from their houses and even their beds, having only been given one or two hours warning, their deportations to unknown areas, the appropriation and plunder of their properties and possessions, the destruction of places of worship, frequently by the hands of the faithful themselves, the forced conversion to the Roman Catholic faith—all these are the facts which have brought out our disgust, which brings the aversion to any honest man and which have had a very deep impact on us, the Muslims.

We never expected nor hoped, let alone desired, such methods of work and administration in our regions. In our difficult and uneasy past, we never, even under the gravest of circumstances, resorted to such an approach. We think that such atrocities should not be committed even against our fiercest enemies, for we doubt that we can find an equal for the things taking place now in our region in the history of any people.

The results of such politics—if we can give these deeds such a name—are absolutely terrible, and it is expected that any reasonable man would conclude the same. Religious tolerance, which had been sensitively observed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite its religious divisions, has been degraded in a frightening manner. The insults and provocations so frequently target us, the Muslims, that it has made us seriously reconsider things. A fraction of the Catholic priests consider that now is an appropriate time, and that they should use this advantage without any constraint or check. The conversion propaganda is so widespread that it resembles the Spanish Inquisition. Under the force of propaganda and without any reaction towards it by various public offices, the mass forcible conversion of the Orthodox Serbs has taken place. In this way, the ones who were denied any value as citizens and who were denied their national character became again citizens with full rights, simply because they converted to Catholicism. The equality of Islam, frequently stressed in writings and public statements, is questioned in life and practice. One frequently hears the Catholic *Ustashas* singing derogatory songs, insulting Muslim feelings and wishing for them the same destiny as that of the Orthodox Serbs.

Apart from the *Ustasha* army, not only the official part of their militia but also illegally organized groups as well, committed great insults and assaults against both the Orthodox Serbs and Muslims, and this caused the highest concern among us. The incident of the terrible murder of an imam, Edhem effendi Hodžić, here in Banjaluka, in the middle of the hospital yard and in the middle of the day, is a terrible example of the thuggishness of the *Ustasha* member named Josip Babić. What is the most pitiable fact is that it is unknown even today whether this criminal was arrested at all, let alone whether or not he received an exemplary punishment, as was demanded by the Muslims of Banjaluka and elsewhere.

We have many examples of *Ustasha* wearing fezzes while committing murders or slaughtering Orthodox Serbs. It was in Bosanski Novi where four trucks full of *Ustasha* crossed the river Sava (in Croatia proper) wearing fezzes. They slaughtered the entire Orthodox Serb population there. The same happened in Bosanska Kostajnica, where in a single day, 862 Serb Orthodox

were slaughtered in the same way. Also in Kulen Vakuf, they did the same, and in that action a special role was played by Miroslav Matijević, an *Ustasha* from Vrtoca. There, 950 Serb Orthodox were slaughtered, leading the *Chetniks*¹ to take revenge on 6 September 1941, when they set Kulen Vakuf on fire, for which 1365 Muslims (men, women and children) paid with their lives. We know that some Catholic *Ustashas* attacked Serb Orthodox shouting, "Push, Mujo, get them Huso, don't let them go Meho"² and the like ...

Now that the *Ustasha* have caused such a grave conflict between us and the Orthodox Serbs, we are called as soldiers to suppress this uprising, meaning to kill Serbs and vice versa, so that we will eradicate and exterminate one another without ever knowing when the conflict will cease or what kind of consequences it will have. This fight, which we did not provoke, became so widespread that many of our villages were burned and plundered, and their inhabitants—men, women and children—are wandering impoverished, hungry and thirsty, seeking help and protection from those who are able or unable to do so. They escape to our cities, which are already full, and it is very difficult to offer them any help. The protection offered to our people in villages is totally inadequate, especially in those regions which are under Italian occupation. The Italian army is watching without any action while Muslim villages are set on fire, as occurred quite recently in the villages in the counties Ključ, Petrovac and Sana. And even worse, those who are the perpetrators in these disorders are now living in security, wearing their uniforms, concerned predominantly with the plunder of Serb and Jewish properties and possessions. We see this best here in Banjaluka, where the property of expelled Serbs and Jews became the source of plunder and enrichment of individuals, their families and friends. We refuse with indignation the accusation that we want to take the properties of others. Here we support all Muslim actions which have the same aim, especially that of Sarajevo Muslims of 12 October 1941³, and in accordance with this we demand that:

1. The genuine security of life and property should be implemented as soon as possible. The same applies to the religious freedom for all citizens of the country.

¹ Serbian monarchic paramilitary group during the Second World War which in the later years of the war collaborated with Nazi Germany.

² These are some among the most common Muslim proper names in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

³ On a public demonstration, where they called for the stopping of massacres on all sides, Muslims of Sarajevo signed a similar petition that invited Muslims in other cities to do likewise.

2. Innocent people should be protected by a strong military force.
3. All those responsible for committing any atrocity or crime should be tried without any regard to their rank or faith. The same applies to those who ordered or helped perpetrate such deeds.
4. All kinds of religious intolerance should be forbidden.
5. Appropriate material support for those who suffered for no reason during these disorders should be delivered as soon as possible.

In Banjaluka, 12 November 1941.

Translated by Nihad Dostović

This is the second part of the third volume of the four-volume series, a daring project of CEU Press, presenting the most important texts that triggered and shaped the processes of nation-building in the many countries of Central and Southeast Europe. Fifty-two texts illustrate the evolution of modernism in the region. Essays, articles, poems, or excerpts from longer works offer new opportunities of possible comparisons of the respective national cultures. The volume focuses on the literary and scientific attempts at squaring the circle of individual and collective identities. Often outspokenly critical of the romantic episode, these texts reflect a more sophisticated and critical stance than in the preceding periods. At the same time, rather than representing a complete rupture, they often continue and confirm the romantic identity narratives, albeit with “other means.” The volume also presents the ways national minorities sought to legitimize their existence with reference to their cultural and institutional peculiarity.

“The primary source collection *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe* provides a long-awaited alternative to conventional narratives of the region’s history. If read in tandem with the background offered for each piece, the texts point to the multiple places, events, and ideas connecting individuals in the region to others within and beyond it and across time, throwing into outline the networks and communities that thrived across imperial, confessional and national boundaries. Individually, the texts are an excellent tool for undergraduate teaching. Collectively they are much, much more. I heartily recommend that the series be read from beginning to end by every current and would-be scholar engaged in the study of this region in order to more fully grasp the embeddedness of regional actors in a world of ideas spanning Europe and the Mediterranean, and occasionally stretching even farther, with traces evident in the most seemingly disparate events. Students and practiced scholars alike come away with new questions that will help move the field forward.”

Holly Case

Associate Professor of History, Cornell University

“The series on ‘Collective Identity’ is a unique contribution to the study of national identity, official history and the field of nationalism studies in general. That the volumes are not broken down into national categories but are divided into themes enables it to be truly transnational. Yet the fact that the authors cited range from Austrian to Albanian, and from Greek to Polish makes this work an extremely useful companion volume to any academic program dealing with the comparative study of nationalism and national identity.”

Selim Deringil

Professor of History, Boğaziçi University

ALREADY PUBLISHED:

Vol. I. Late Enlightenment – Emergence of the Modern ‘National Idea’

Vol. II. National Romanticism – The Formation of National Movements

Vol. III/1 Modernism – The Creation of Nation-States

FORTHCOMING:

Vol. IV. Anti-Modernism – Radical Revisions of Collective Identity

Central European University Press

Budapest – New York

Sales and information:

ceupress@ceu.hu

Website: <http://www.ceupress.com>

ISBN 978-963-7326-64-6

